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GLENALMOND

SERMONS

JOHN HUNTLEY SKRINE

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The Mountain Mother.

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The Mountain Mother:

GLENALMOND SERMONS.

BY

JOHN HUNTLEY SKRINE,

WARDEN OF GLENALMOND.

Author of "Pastor Agnorum."

"AND AFAR THE MOUNTAIN MOTHER'S
SHADOW FALLS BELOVED OF YOU."
School Hymn for Past and Present.

London:

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THESE SERMONS

ARE DEDICATED AS A PARTING GIFT

TO

THOSE WHO HEARD THEM

IN THE CHAPEL AT GLENALMOND.

July, 1902.

"LEVAVI OCULOS."

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I.

The Tongue.

St. James i. 26.

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."

THERE was an experience in life which had been very much burnt into the mind of St. James: it is the danger of sinning with the tongue. We do not know enough of his life and the people he had to do with to know exactly why this danger was so much in his thoughts. But it was so, for he comes back to the theme presently, and calls the tongue a world of iniquity, an untameable evil, as uncontrollable and mischievous as a fire in a prairie or in a western forest. Here he goes no further than to say that people who do not control their tongue have no genuine religion, though they think they have. But that is a strong thing enough to say: to most of us it will seem a paradox, or at least an exaggeration. It is worth examining then. Come, let us look, and see if St. James is making a mistake. Can the tongue be so important a part of us that its right use or wrong decides whether our religion is real or is vain?

One very obvious remark occurs at once, which is on St. James' side of the argument. We all do a great deal of talking. We differ very much, the taciturn or the talkative; but

with the average man or woman talk holds a high proportion to action in life. Or, if that should seem doubtful, as in some professions *is* the case, at least one may say that there are in a day more opportunities of going right or wrong morally in the things we say, than in the things we do. Vast spaces of one day are filled with occupations which so engage our faculties that it is not easy to see how we *can* do anything wrong during those times. What opportunities of doing wrong has the student at his table, and the copying clerk with a file of letters on his desk? But as soon as a man's tongue is his own again, he is free to be foolish, or frivolous, or spiteful, or braggart, or unjust to others, or profane, or unclean, or false. Here, then, at once, is something to be urged on the side of St. James' fear about the tongue; the tongue is a special opportunity of sin.

But next there comes to one's mind that word of Jesus that the things which defile a man are not those which enter into him, as the meats and drinks, which Jews thought mattered so much, but the things which come from within a man and out of him. That which is in the heart, and comes out from it, that defileth a man. Now what is the chief channel by which the evil which may be in the heart comes out of it? Is it not the mouth that speaks? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Of whatever kind the abundance of the heart may be, wisdom or folly, love or malice, reverence or wantonness, the man's speech is the outflow of that abundance, a bitter stream or sweet, a foul or a clear, as the inner fountain may be. The very word for the use of speech reminds us of this: we call it utterance, that is "outerance," making outward something that was within us. If, then, the tongue utters us, one sees easily this, that our talk is the indicator of character, the revealer of what

is in the spirit, the register of the goodness or badness in it. Not only so. It is also a most true revealer, a most sensitive register, it reports all that is there. A great deal of man's evil (and goodness, too, perhaps) never gets opportunity of being displayed in an act; the circumstances of his life possibly give no opportunity of realizing that which he has thought and felt—social pressure, want of time, or the police, check the impulse short of an act. But almost all a man's badness can get unchecked as far as his tongue. Surely that is one reason why "by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

But even this is not all. The tongue does not only register character, it does not only mark as on a dial-face the degree of the bad or the good within us. The thermometer can only tell us the temperature of a room, the barometer informs us of the condition of the atmosphere: these instruments cannot alter the facts. But this register of human temper, this "ethometer," not only indicates, it also reacts upon the temper. Men say that the word written abides, while the word spoken perishes on the air. It may be partly so in law and business. It is not so in life. The word spoken does abide; its effect is a permanent one. When we utter a thought we give body to what till then was a vapour, when we speak out a resolve we fix it, when we give words to the mood of our spirit we stereotype it. It may be true that sometimes free speech appears to dissipate an irritation or a discontent instead of increasing it, and that sometimes by talking about what they mean to do people forget to do it. But that on the whole the utterance of a feeling gives it more force is admitted by statesmen, who check seditious speeches or immoral literature. And does anyone pretend that a man becomes more charitable by uttering his spite, or more reve-

rent by loosing a profanity, or cleaner-minded by venting his vileness? Well, then, here is the grand reason why bridling the tongue is a great matter in religion; it is that the tongue not only makes the inward evil plain to see, it makes it stronger too.

And still there is more to say on St. James' side, "Bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart" are his words. The sin of the tongue is one about which self-deceit is the easiest. "Words are not deeds," people tell themselves, and therefore they are nothing: on the score of virtue words do not count. "Words are wind," says a proverb, empty wind. But perhaps if we would remember how mere wind, empty wind, can blight a harvest, or carry a pestilence, or wreck a ship on the high seas, we should have more respect for wind and for words. We might come to see that a word may be a deed, and a very weighty one; may blacken a character, or cross a career, or set a family at war, or ruin a business, or blight a prosperous friendship, or start a brother's soul downhill. Meanwhile we find it easy to tell ourselves that in moral conduct words do not count. It is just that self-deceit which helps sins of the tongue, in the making and marring of character, to count for so very much.

Now is not this enough? Is not St. James' view made good, that to command the tongue, seeing that talk not only is the revealer of character, but the maker of character, is a very great part of religion; that the religion of him who will not bridle his tongue is vain? I think it is. Well, then, if the tongue matters so much as this, what an interest arises in the subject of the tongue and its talk! How stimulating it is to one to reflect that in such a common trivial occurrence as a conversation the very soul of one is acting, is under trial, is being bettered or worsened! How the ordinary inter-

course and socialities of life become charged with a meaning and a value! Small talk, do you call it? Why, it is a very great and not a small thing, a thing full of keenness and zest, if when I am bridling my fast-running tongue, and trying to say what is true, what is just, what is kind, what is helpful, what is generous, what is of good example—all the while I am training my soul, I am quickening the spiritual life, I am fitting myself to be of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Ay, ay, "he that bridleth not his tongue." But how often have I wished that St. James would come our way, and preach us another side of his doctrine. We want it so.

"Bridleth." Yes, but "bridling" is a horseman's act. It is a poor horseman that can only bridle his horse, only pull him in, and doesn't know how to give him the rein—and the spur. And sometimes the desire rises in one to take St. James text and turn it about, and make it run quite differently, and thus: "If any boy among you thinks he is religious, and bridleth his tongue when he sees folly and vice and injustice being done, and will not say a word because (says he) 'I am a boy of honour,' which means, because I am afraid; if any boy among you thinks he is religious and good, and spurreth not his tongue to speak his mind out like a man and a Christian, *that* boy's religion is vain."

II.

Temper.

PSALM XXXVII. 8.

"Fret not thyself, else shalt thou be moved to do evil."

THIS is a Psalm which deserves to be what we might call a "household" Psalm; it is so specially adapted for common use by ordinary people: the circumstances of life which call for this lyric as the proper guide and comforter are so common an incident in the existence of men upon this planet: we have so very often occasion to fret ourselves because things are not as we desire, or even as we deserve, and because the wrong persons seem to prosper in affairs, while the good have troubles. For such cases the Psalm is very comforting, as to myself is known from the experience of a company of people (it is a quarter of a century ago, and I therefore need not mind referring to it) who happened to read this Psalm in Church on a Sunday during a certain crisis in their common affairs, when they believed they had very good reason for complaining of ill-treatment from neighbours. It seemed to them that the Psalms both of the morning and the evening fitted with strange propriety their situation at the moment, and some of them at least got some comfort, and, as I will hope, some light from them. That probably means that this portion of Scripture is of very general use in human

troubles and trials, and this may encourage us to look into it to-day.

Three times within the first eight verses the Psalmist utters his refrain, "Fret not thyself—fret not thyself—fret not thyself," adding the last time that to fret oneself will only make us do what is wrong. It is one of the very chief Old Testament passages on the duty of keeping one's temper. "Fret not thyself at the ungodly" means, do not lose your temper at the unsatisfactory state of mortal affairs, in particular that there are bad men who do you wrong, and yet seem very prosperous. "Keep your temper," says this good man of far-away times. It is what we all wish to be able to do, and find rather hard. Let us see if this good man of old can help us.

"Fret not thyself, else shalt thou be moved to do evil." He seems to rest the duty of keeping your temper upon a prudential consideration. It is a mistake to lose your temper, because it will lead you to do the wrong thing: you will make blunders in your heat and haste, you will speak intemperate words, which presently will prove embarrassing to you, you will be tempted to violence which will put you on the wrong side of the law, or at least provoke your adversary to reprisals. That is not all that the Psalmist thinks; the consideration is perhaps only incidental, something by the way; but it is a valuable consideration, and one which the most modern wisdom will re-echo. I should think there is hardly anybody here who has not learnt this piece of wisdom, who does not know that if he loses his temper he is moved to do evil. For suppose he is playing a game of skill, and luck goes against him, and he becomes cross, what happens? As he knows, he plays very badly, and most likely loses the game. Or suppose the game we are playing

is not with any kind of ball, but still is a game in the sense that we have to use skill and good judgment, such a game as is the conduct of almost any profession or business, but especially if it is a game which involves dealing with other people; what happens if our temper fails—as so often it is apt to fail when tasks are long and heads are weary, and the people we deal with are stupid or perverse—what happens? We make blunders for certain; we act too soon, or we act on imperfect knowledge, or we act too violently, and things accordingly go wrong. Yes, be it play or earnest, be it boy or man, no one who loses his temper is so wise as while he kept his temper; a cool head and cool heart will make the cool hand which wins at all games. It is a maxim of most homely, every day, and every age experience, that we had better not fret ourselves, for if we do we shall be moved to do evil.

Have we, then, got reasons enough now for learning command of the temper, from this prudent saying of the Psalmist? Perhaps we never can have reasons enough for an achievement so hard as that of commanding one's temper, a thing which another wise Jew has declared to be a greater feat than capturing a fortified place. "He that ruleth his spirit [is better] than he that taketh a city." But anyhow, I do not think any virtue is well based upon considerations of prudence only. The prudent thought that if we are not good-tempered we shall make mistakes and get into trouble is, I will admit, not a powerless consideration. It does a great deal, no doubt. When a boy comes to school with a home reputation for having a very irritable or violent temper, it is notable how much gentler and more governable that bad temper becomes as soon as the owner of it finds himself in a society which will not stand that kind of thing,

but makes ill-temper an inconvenience to the person who generates it. And again, most men of business, and public servants in government offices, whatever they may be at home and in their own families, contrive to be very courteous, pleasant, and long-suffering, and reluctant to take offence, when they deal with strangers in their offices and houses of business. The reason is they know that ill-temper and quarrelling hinder good business, and make trouble and loss for those who indulge in it. Let us then not deny the force of the Psalmist's reason, that ill-temper moves a man to do evil. Yet do not let us be satisfied with it. For us Christians it is not enough. Our righteousness in the matter of temper must exceed the righteousness of the polite Civil servant, and of the boy who does not lose his temper because he does not dare. We must command ourselves, not because of the inconveniences of bad temper, but because bad temper is bad.

Why *is* it bad? Why should a Christian, as Christian, avoid it? We have to answer, because ill-temper is a form of selfishness, and also a form of weakness.

That is just what many people do not think it. They do not think it selfish; they think it is some natural, or, as the phrase goes, constitutional peculiarity; that men are born that way; that it is a natural quality, like, let us say, a mercurial or a phlegmatic temperament, or a florid complexion or a sallow one. Of course, if it were that kind of thing it would seem very excusable. But this is not so. Bad temper is simply a form of selfishness. For what are the things which make people lose their temper? Either the person wants something for himself, and cannot get it, and he thereupon flies in a rage:—that is greed, and greed, of course, is selfish; or he is not treated with as much respect or honour

as he thinks he ought to have, and he sulks:—that is pride, and pride is selfishness; or he is opposed and contradicted in some purpose of his, and he fumes at it, and refuses to have anything more to do with people who will not do exactly what he thinks best:—that is wilfulness and self-will, and surely self-will is selfish. Here are the main causes of ill-temper, and in all of them the reason why the man fumes, or sulks, or rages is because he cares too much about himself, and not enough about other people, that is, because he is selfish. And if anyone reminds me that some people, not specially selfish, yet have a bad temper, through illness or nervous irritability, I shall say—this is true, but it only means that in their case the temptation to be selfish is very much greater than it is with us who are not ill nor have nerves which are irritable, and that we who lose our temper, say, once in three months, may be far more to blame than the tempted ones who are cross every week.

And then bad temper is also a form of weakness. This will be heartily disbelieved. A bad-tempered person fancies it is his strength and force which make him so. He prides himself on the manly spirit which will not put up with slights, which is impatient with the folly and bungling and slowness of incompetent people; he feels that he is never more magnificent than when he is in a rage. Did not someone or other say that bad temper is merely a form of energy? Just what he feels is the case! His temper is a form of his energy. Well, it is a form of energy in the sense in which the sparks which fly from a smith's hammer, and the bang which gives the blows, are the energy of the blows it strikes; but the sparks do not swing the hammer, nor do they forge the horse-shoe, nor are they any use at all.

And just so, though some energetic people have quick tem-

pers, it is not the sparkle or the noise of their temper which does the work they do, and that work is not done any the better for these, but always a little the worse. It is not meant that people ought never to be angry. There is a place and a use for anger, there are times when impatience with others is most wholesome and stimulating, times when indignation at wrong-doing is a duty and an urgent one, times when we can be angry and sin not, and when it would be the sin *not* to be angry. There *is* a wrath of man which does work the righteousness of God. But anger of this kind is not losing one's temper; on the contrary, it is a noble and beautiful and helpful command of temper, a using it at the right time, when it is of use, one which is by no means specially exhibited by those who are given to "losing temper." No, losing the temper is a phrase which means what it says; it is losing something; it is the incontinence which cannot restrain self, the leakiness which cannot hold an impulse in, but lets it break out, the weak hand which cannot keep its grasp on the lower nature in us, but lets the chained wild beast loose to do mischief. If there is any meaning in the words "weak" and "strong," then bad temper is a form of human weakness, and those who would be the strong will meditate the proverb, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

III.

Cowardice.

Revelation xii. 7.

"There was war in Heaven."

WHAT is the nature of this statement? Grammatically it is the statement of a historical fact; and I imagine a good many people actually take it simply so. But if I ask even the least instructed among you in the matter of books, you would have enough power of criticism to see that there is somehow a difference in kind between the words "There was war in Heaven," and the words, like them in form, "Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." This last is clearly history, and nothing else. What of the other? If it is history, it is not history on the same level.

Let me take another passage and ask you to compare it. "The Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? . . . And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord and said, I will persuade him . . . I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He said, Thou shalt persuade him . . . go forth and do so."

Any one of you will feel that this last is like "There was

war in Heaven." And you will go on to remark that Micaiah, when he told that tale of the lying spirit, was speaking not as a historian, but as a prophet; and the writer of the Revelation was doing the same. That means, that as Micaiah before Ahab wanted to utter his conviction, that God had put the truth into his heart, and suffered Ahab's prophets to deceive him, but chose to say this in the form of a pictured council scene in Heaven, just so the New Testament writer, when he wants to tell us how good and evil stand towards one another, how they cannot be reconciled, but one must drive out the other, and how the one that does and will prevail is Good;—this writer tells us so by picturing a battle scene in Heaven. All this, of course, I might have said by using a single word, and saying that the writer spoke symbolically; but remembering how not so very long ago most religious people thought they were being told here of an historical event, and having in mind that it is a religious task of our present age to study the Bible more discriminatingly, I have said what I wished to say in this fuller way. We are coming to read our Bible more discriminatingly; but we are not coming to think the Bible less truly a book from God; we are, however, learning that God's Spirit, by Whose help this written Word comes to be, sometimes writes history, and at other times writes parable.

Well, then, since this is parable, what is its interpretation; what does it teach?

"There was war in Heaven." What, even in Heaven? War on earth we quite understand; but we fancied that was because earth was earth, a bad place, and war one of its badnesses. Now it appears that war is not a part only of our depraved mortal condition: Heaven, the high and holy place, it also has felt the shock of war, its din and violence,

its hates and pains, its despairs and triumphs. War is not the disgraceful accident of some inferior districts of the universe. No, there is fighting at the sacred centre, at almost the fount and source of things. Good certainly proves to be the mighty power, and conquers, but only by fighting hard: evil is driven out, but only by being beaten on a pitched field. Good wins; yes, but only because it has its champions, and those champions are brave, and will give blows and take them. That seems to be the law even in Heaven; and if men have written about, and dreamed about, and painted pictures of, and dedicated Churches to, the fighting Archangel Michael, and altogether made him (if one may say it) their hero among angel names, fighting human battles in his name, and winning them very much by the faith in him; it has been because they obscurely felt in their hearts this truth that in war there is something divine, and they could make this truth clear and alive to themselves by imagining it in the heroic figure of a divine champion, with his sword of lightning, and his foot upon the dragon's neck.

"There was war in Heaven." Then how much more certainly will there be war on earth; how much more inevitable here that good should win the day only by fighting for it, by giving and taking blows, by daring and confronting and resisting and enduring. Now this is not really a welcome truth. There are people who are fond of fighting, but these are not so many as is sometimes supposed, and of these some, who will fight with a relish to please themselves, are not so ready to fight for the help of good. Fighting is for the most part disagreeable, and a quiet life is a thing for which people will give not perhaps anything, but still a great deal: peace they will buy not at any price, but at a high one—the price of a good deal of honour and faithfulness to con-

science. Accordingly we are tempted to make just a little too much of the duty of, as much as lieth in us, living peaceably with all men, and to be very respectful to such maxims as tell us to leave well alone, and let sleeping dogs lie. And, of course, Christianity *is* a Gospel of peace, and to follow peace with all men *is* a foremost Christian virtue. But we want a balance of truth, a proportioning of duties; and therefore we want Michael, the fighting Archangel, with his buckler and sword, as well as the meek angels of tenderness and compassion, with wings of a dove.

In old days, when you heard elder people debating about sending a boy to school, you commonly heard the argument, "It will be so good for him to learn to fight his own battles." That was, however, in rougher days, when school, considered as an opportunity for fighting your own battles, was a place very well fitted for the purpose. And yet it has struck me that the argument is not so much out of date, if only you word it a little differently. School is still, in gentler days, a very good place for fighting not your own battles, but the battles of Good. One side of life at school is that of learning, growing and developing, imitating, making friends, enjoying. But there is another side—war. There is war, a contest of principles of good and evil, a conflict between what you think you ought to do because conscience bids you, and what you are inclined to do because your companions dictate it. There is the need of obeying some rule of conduct of your own which is inconvenient to others, and so resented by them; there is the need of refusing a compliance with a dubious practice, when refusing will irritate; there is the need of speaking the word of protest against what is wrong, when that word is a sort of condemnation, and may be as provoking as a challenge. And if you know anything yet about life at

school, this you know, that when there grows up public evil in a school, when conduct is cruel and talk is vile, the chief reason is not that many like the cruel things and the vile things, but that those who are good are, too commonly, also cowardly. They are cowardly, and will not speak when they ought. Now cowardice is a word which implies, one may almost say, war. There can be no cowardice where there is no danger against which the personal life has to match itself; there are cowards because there is war.

This year, St. Michael's Day, which usually finds us well settled to our work, happens to begin for us our new school year. It is a famous omen. It marks out what our year's ideal should be—to be courageous. Long ago someone said courage is knowledge, knowledge of what is to be feared, and what is not. It does not sound correct, I know; but there is thus much truth in it: to know your danger beforehand, and settle in your minds to face it, is the best of securities for behaving courageously. A few may be brave by instinct; most of us are brave by deliberation. Then I say, deliberately plan not to be a social coward, frame your mind at once to resist, to dare, to confront wrong opinion, to endure the shock and clash of differing with others. And take this for omen, that in Heaven the victory went with the good; it was Michael and his angels, the holy champions, who won. The dragon fought and his angels, but evil prevailed not; neither was its place found any more in Heaven. No, and its place will not be found on earth either, when men are brave enough—and boys.

IV.

School Friendships.

2 Samuel i. 26.

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women."

O ends, in this noble lyric, one of the world's famous friendships. There are not a great many friendships which have left an abiding record in human memories; but there is in legend the friendship of Theseus and Peirithous, of Orestes and Pylades, of Roland and Olivier on the borderland of legend and history, and in Jewish story this of David and Jonathan. The world's later ages do not furnish so readily as the earlier ages examples of a friendship between men, heroic enough in force and beauty to make a mark on the human mind. One is led to think that the secret of friendship is a secret partly lost. It is, of course, clear that when Christianity and the chivalry of the middle ages gave a new honour to the love of man and woman, the passion of friendship between man and man might easily lose force; for affection, no more than any other human energy, can be spent twice over, and what is given to one object is taken from another. Still friendship remains a great good among human goods, and it is well that we should know the secret of it, and by what care and art it can be engendered and preserved and

heightened. Therefore it will not be amiss to look at this old tale of how David and Jonathan loved one the other with a love, as the poet of them says, passing the love of woman, in the hope that by looking at it we may recover some portion of that lost secret—how friends are made and kept. Most of us have friends, all of us wish for them. How may we make and keep them?

How was it then that, as the chronicler tells us, in those first days of theirs, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul?" How was it?

That is a question which sometimes is hard to answer. It is a very common observation to hear that "one cannot see what So-and-So finds to like in So-and-So." That means that human affection is a mysterious thing. And I do not think we ought to wish it otherwise. When love parts with its mysteriousness it will part, I fear, with a great portion of its worth as well. However, there seems nothing very mysterious in the love of Jonathan for David (for on that side the friendship began). They were two very gallant youths, and they both had in a high measure the character of generosity and love of honour. The strange thing would have been if they had *not* been drawn to one another. If David and Jonathan had not been friends when their fate threw them into company, we should have had occasion to reflect upon the perverseness in human affairs, by which the most unfit seemed to be joined together, while those are kept asunder who of all people ought to be joined. No, when we see the fair, bright-eyed stripling coming into camp from the slaying of the tall Philistine, and giving his name to the wondering king, we are not surprised to hear of the king's son, who stands behind his chair, that "when David had made an end of speaking unto Saul, the

soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."

There is, however, another question much more reasonable to ask, not how they became friends, but how they remained friends. For really this is somewhat strange. For how much there was to make love difficult! Through what entanglements and under what shocks and strains they held their love true! For that friendship's sake Jonathan, son of a father who loved him well if not wisely, and heir to the crown of Israel, has to brave the anger of his father by supporting his friend, and trying to justify him, has to hear himself called, "Thou son of the perverse, rebellious woman" (whatever those words mean), has to baffle the best-laid plans of the king, and, for the reward of all this trouble and pain and risk, has to lose the crown, which by all human reckoning was his right. What must it have cost Jonathan to do this, which he did? "Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the wood," (when David was an outlaw and hunted by the king for death), "and strengthened his hand in God. And he said unto him, Fear not; for the hand of Saul, my father, shall not find thee, and thou shalt be king over all Israel, and I shall be next unto thee."

Again, to what a trial to friendship on Jonathan's part toward David, are we pointed in those words which remind us of a certain terrible reality in Eastern life, the temptation of a new monarch to slay the rivals to his throne, "Thou shalt not only while yet I live show me the kindness of the Lord that I die not; but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever; no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth." Indeed and indeed Jonathan had much to bear with, if he was to go on loving David, the youth whom he had helped to

exalt from nothingness, that he might presently oust the friend who had raised him, from that friend's most just hopes.

What was the secret then which kept this friendship alive, in defiance of all that difficulty and danger, and family affection and duty, and most urgent self-interest could do to destroy it? The mere mutual liking of two gallant and generous young men, who had the same manly tastes and chivalrous sentiments, is not enough to explain it. The unsolderable spell which cemented this union of hearts was of no such stuff as that. The same passage which reminds us of what there was to imperil their friendship, reveals also the secret of its safe keeping. "Jonathan arose and went to David in the wood, and strengthened his hand in God." What is "strengthening his hand in God"? The expression is obscure, but it will most naturally mean that Jonathan heartened David in his danger and exile by reminding him of God's promise, and by declaring his own faith in it. That touches the true bond of this friendship. What bound these two together was not natural liking and congenial temper, but the sympathy of a common faith. Each saw in the other one priceless virtue—devotion to a holy ideal; each knew that the other lived faithful to a sacred purpose, an ambition which was pure. If Jonathan loved David, it was because David was true to a divinely-appointed destiny, and followed it through peril and pain and discouragements unshaken. If, in turn, David loved Jonathan, it was because he, too, saw in his friend a lofty and pathetic obedience to a fate, which was a fate of deprivation and endurance and humiliation, but yet was the fate which God had chosen for him. They loved each other so well, and with such steadfastness, because they loved God yet more: their "loves in higher love endured." The glory that gathered upon their earthly affection was the

glory which breathed upon it from a spiritual faith. You may say, if you like, that the ideal and the ambition, alike of David and of Jonathan, were human ideals and ambitions, concerned with such secular things as kingship and military prowess or command, and that we talk unreally when we talk of these in language which fits the faith of Apostles and Saints. I do not think so. David and Jonathan believed according to their time and its knowledge of God; their faith, which was concerned with a secular destiny, was still faith, and had faith's power to glorify a mutual affection. Light fell on their mortal love from that other and not mortal world.

There let us leave this pair of friends in the halo of their heroic friendship. If we turn from them to look at friendships of our own, it is probable that these will look but very poverty-stricken copies of a pattern so golden; pale and starved, or coarse and mercenary, beside the unblemished beauty of this old knightly tale. But whatever our friendships are, it is likely they will be at least better for a glance taken at a high example, even if it should seem too high for imitation. This much concerns you who are at school. It is often said that the friendships of a life are made at school. We may exaggerate this; for the world, and even the University or the Army, is a bigger place than school, and therefore contains more chances and choices of friends, as of other good things. I am inclined to think that a man's best friends are at least as likely to be those he makes later, after he has left school. Still many school-made friendships do last for good; and, anyhow, at school it is that we have to *learn* the art of making friends. Well then, learn the secret of this art from David and Jonathan. Let the ground of a friendship be that each finds in the other, worth. Choose a friend because you can see a virtue in him—

some truth of conduct, some ambition which is not selfish only; some reverence for an aim in life higher than the worldly aims to which any and every one is equal. And, having chosen him, keep him yours by some like worth in you. Many a trivial thing may begin a friendship—accidents of a common taste, or a shallow liking, or the chance of being thrown together in work or play. Many things may begin it, but I do not know what other thing can bind a friendship fast and make it live on, and outlive the changes and separations of human existence, unless it be a mutual reverence. When friend can see in friend a nobleness, even if it be marred (as when is it not marred?) by infirmities of purpose, and even errors of act, when each can know that his friend is trying to pass through this selfish world by help of a faith in a selfless world, then friendship goes on and does not die; these are the friends for life; "*their* loves in higher love endure."

V.

Bullying.

ROMANS XII. 10.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love."

AS one sets out to find a text for the first school Sunday of a new year, there meets one a very ancient and universal feeling. It is the feeling which made people in Rome 2,000 years ago take pains to open the new year with some stroke of useful work—a few thrusts of the digger's spade, a few stitches of the cobbler's needle, and so on—as an example of industry for the year. It is the feeling which makes people in Scotland 2,000 years later attach importance to the first foot over their threshold, when the old year has chimed his last. It is a feeling at which science smiles as a superstition, but of which I expect science will not rid us by her smile, because there is, when all's said, a truth under it. The feeling is commonly called the belief in omens, and as such is smiled at. I will give it another name, less open to derision, and call it the feeling of the power and sacredness of beginnings. I honestly believe that beginnings do matter, and have power. That is why I sought carefully to find, where I prefer to find it, among the services of the Sunday, a text which should be a fit one to open 1897 at Glenalmond.

When then, in glancing through the Epistle, my eye fell

on "Be kindly affectioned . . . in brotherly love," I had no sort of doubt that the year's omen had offered itself. Let me try to show how the words struck me as a good watch-word for this present year.

Brotherly love (it is one word, brother's-love, in the Greek) was a kind of discovery of Christianity. To be Christians—to be brothers, it was all the same: if you were one you were the other. This love between believers as between brothers was simply one aspect of their faith as Christians, it was faith when and where it acted socially. What a strong passion it was you and I are not able to know, because—this is a sad thing to have to say—because it has been very much withdrawn from our observation. But we read the letters of Paul and others, and see that they spoke of this warm, uniting passion as a matter of course; and we read elsewhere that the heathen admitted the fact, wondering very much at the way "these Christians loved one another." What has become of it; where is gone this wondrous new human passion, this holy freemasonry of brother's love?

I think it is quite beside the mark to be cynical and sarcastic about the decay of it in later times. It really is too plain that when Christians were few and persecuted, it was more natural to hang closely together, than afterwards, when it was safe and prosperous to be a Christian, and everyone else was one. We do not complain because an old-fashioned warm hospitality, so necessary when roads were bad and inns were none, goes out of use in a populous, settled country. Then let us also admit that the love of Christians as Christians is a much harder thing to maintain when we have no longer that need of one another which enemies, scorners, and persecutors made once. But neither, on the other hand, let us be content with our dulness and coldness, our present

unbrotherliness. If that fervid love of the persecuted Church was, humanly speaking, not maintainable in a safe and predominant Church, yet it had its purpose for the future. This love was the model, the example, set up while it was possible for men to set it up, of what Christians ought to become, of what, pray God, they some day will become. That we have fallen from that model is not wonderful, man being as he is; but if we do not at length return to that model, return with all the enrichment of our knowledge, our civilization, our spiritual and mental experiences, our arts of life, our complexity of individual character, return, I say, to this pure model of brotherly love as the right form and mould of social human life,—then there is shame and failure, and the world has not learned Christ.

Meanwhile, if the great Christian world is far from being a great brotherhood, we are all of us bound one by one to be brotherly; we are not excused from that duty as individuals. How shall the great world ever become a brotherhood unless one by one its members become brothers? And I could point out to you, not individuals, but an actually existing society, for which the excuse we have been making on behalf of the world does not hold, a body of people whose fortunate circumstances make brotherly love for them not an unnatural, unnecessary, and inappropriate sentiment, but natural, easy, congenial, and of great public use. I can very quickly show you that society, for we are seeing it as we look on one another. We here, we of this school, are not so many that the force of brotherliness should be beaten thin over too wide a surface; we are not so placed that unity of feeling is a thing we can afford to get on without, a thing superfluous for our several comfort and our public credit; nor are we, I think, so mercenary or stupid in our ideas about school life

and history as to value cheaply the praise of being a united and a patriotic school. Well, and we are Christians. Here surely we shall find the Christian brotherly love.

Shall we? I do not say we shall not, if we look hard enough. I for one have seen it, thankfully seen it, sometimes. But I am bound to say also that I have seen another thing. At frequent intervals during the nine years which this term is closing for myself, I have witnessed the fact of some group of boys setting themselves to make miserable the life of some one other boy. The ways of making miserable have differed with the boy persecuted, or the persecutors, or their opportunities; there has been a monotonous likeness in the main fact,—boys who have had the power have set themselves to render unhappy someone who had not the power to prevent it. Looking back on my memories of these nine years, I am led to think that you find it necessary to have always some one person to make miserable. One does not see the necessity, but you act as if there were one. And so some of you persecute (I fear one must say it) because it is pleasant to be cruel, and others because they want to please you who are cruel, and a few more because they are silly and will do anything which someone else has done. And also, as if to put the conduct in its true colours, and shabby colours they are, you choose for annoyance whoever is least able to protect himself. Well, but the sportsman (to take no higher standard of conduct) does not choose the easy game, but the hard. To pick the easiest is a course which everybody would call, to take things at this lower standard, less than manly; many people would call it simply mean and miserable.

I am not going to reason with you that this is wrong. What need to reason it? What have I to do but remind you that we here are Christians? To say in old words with a new mean-

ing, "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" We are Christians here, we are brethren; why do we so forget or so scorn the duty of a brotherhood? But because this is the beginning of a year, and that year a special one, I have thought not of a new reason, but of a new occasion for remembering and doing this duty of brotherliness. It is the sixtieth year of our Queen's reign, and all the nation is full of projects for celebrating the event, from hospitals and nursing orders and open spaces down to the restoring of local monuments or the planting of young trees. The truest idea is one which has royal approval; it is that what is done should be (so I read this week) something for the relief of the suffering, something to make happier the condition of the less happy of Her Majesty's subjects. I commend this to you. Let us signalize the year by an act better than any money gift—a new beginning in kindness to the less happy of the Queen's subjects among ourselves. Let us honour a year which, besides being the Queen's year, is a Glenalmond year too, the fiftieth year of the opening of these buildings as a school, let us honour it as from the earliest times of all a Jubilee has been honoured, by an act of mercy, of letting the oppressed go free, by breaking every yoke of ill-will, neglect, and unkindness. We can raise no such monument of the Queen's year and our own year as would be the moral resolve and effort to live together kindly affectioned in brotherly love.

Are these wasted words? If for nine years I have watched unkindness as a constant fact, is it any use expecting that you will now alter? Yes, it is. I do expect it. And I expect it simply because I believe in the Christian religion, because we here are Christians, and Christ is our Lord, and Christ has commanded us to live in brotherly love, and the word that

proceeds out of His mouth is not in vain, will not return unto Him void, but will prosper in that whereunto He has sent it. He sends it you to-day, by me, however unworthily; it will not be void. You will listen to it. Some will remember your Christianity, which you have, only you so much forget it; some, your natural goodness of heart; some will be strong enough to interpose, and pronounce that cruelty is not the right thing here, is "bad form" with us; and so there will be, by God's grace, this year more kindness in Glenalmond, more brotherly love in that school where, perhaps of all schools that are, the want of brotherliness would be the deepest shame.

VI.

Home Letters from School.

EPHESIANS VI. 1.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord."

"CHILDREN, obey your parents," is a familiar precept enough. But what is the meaning of the qualifying words affixed; how obey them "in the Lord"?

Do not imagine that the addition is idle; that this is one of those pious phrases which some men throw in here and there into their talk, sometimes rather conventionally and by way of a charm. "Obey your parents," and "obey them in the Lord," are not the same. St. Paul means, "Obey them—because you and they are members of Christ: let your obedience be a part of your duty, not as men, not even as believers in Jehovah, but as Christians."

It is quite possible that the new-made Christians were in some danger of thinking that the old Ten Commandments were rendered antiquated by the new code of Christian life. St. Paul will have them know that the old duty holds good, and has a new sanction, *i.e.*, a new ground or reason for being fulfilled. You are Christians: well, that is just a new reason for obeying parents; the family tie is one of the opportunities of Christian conduct, the family life is one of the channels into which the new vigour of Christianity pours itself. The new age demands the old duty with a new cogency.

We Christians believe that there will never again be an age so new as the age of Christianity. Yet each age has its fresh characteristics, its special leading idea, and so each age will want to review ancient duties in a modern light, will want to be sure that the new knowledge does not abrogate them, but only illumine them with a novel atmosphere.

What is the leading idea of our age? I think I should say it was the idea of sympathy, the idea that men ought to know about and to feel for one another. Sympathy between class and class, rank and rank, age and age—a sense that we human beings are of one blood all over earth, and ought to live more like brothers—that is what, roughly speaking, seems to me the moral idea which is most moving the world just now.

So a preacher nowadays might, like St. Paul, echo the old precept with a new regard. "Honour, love, and obey your parents" in—the spirit of the new age, in the spirit of sympathy, unity, humanity, love of humankind.

"In the spirit of sympathy." It is much in point to think of sympathy, when one addresses the present generation of boys at school. Modern school life, at boarding schools, is a great separater of parent and son. For more than eight months out of twelve, for more than two-thirds of their time between childhood and young manhood, son and parent live apart. The reasons for that separation are strong and not decreasing, but there is the fact of separation. And separation of the two lives does make sympathy more difficult. I do not say (for I do not think it) that there is less sympathy now between the two: only I say sympathy is made harder by the fact of absence.

Well, then, how shall we deal with that fact?

There is one piece of advice I should like to give you,

only that it seems out of time just now. It is, "Make a right use of your holidays." To-day, with the long, long term between you and holiday, that seems not practical enough. Yet remember it when Christmas comes, and think of the weeks at home not as a mere time for taking your own ease and enjoying yourself, but as an opportunity for love. Then is the time to knit up some partly unravelled tie, to spare thoughts and experiences and hopes, yours and your parents, to learn more of their real life, and to explain to them your own. Then is the occasion for a hundred little proofs of love, a hundred little nameless attentions and courtesies, in act or word, or look or tone: that is how we plant the seeds, that is how we train the growing tendrils of family affection.

The other piece of advice you will agree is at least well timed. Now you are at school keep up the memory of home. You will feel at present that that is easy enough, only too easy perhaps to a few of you, with your foot just over the new strange world's threshold. Ah! well; later on it may be a bit less easy. You may find there is real danger of leaving home too much behind you. There are boys who live two lives, a home life and a school life. That is ill, because then they begin to think that what they do here will not matter at home, and so a great safeguard against wrongdoing is broken down. Any of you can understand this. Some sins—as certain kinds of falseness, and unkindness, for example—are easier to fall into at school than at home. This is the reason why people who meet boys in their holidays often think they are much better than they are known to be by their schoolfellows and masters. Probably it is because they *are* better then, while at home. And if the sympathy with home would follow them back to school, and fall

like a shadow—no, rather like a light—upon them, there they would be better, while at school.

Then how to keep up this sympathy? Let us not be ashamed to speak of a detail. It is the home-letter. The home-letter. What a poor dry, helpless, inglorious, little document it often looks. But to the wise, who know how human life is made up, it has dignity, it has sacredness. A glorifying light falls on it from the preciousness of the human destiny, in which it may be a hinge of right-doing or of wrong.

I must be brief. But here are three reasons for valuing the weekly letter home.

1. It generally costs you something to write it: not much, but something. It is a thing that has got to be done; it wants a little time, and a little, perhaps for young heads a good deal of, thought. Then, if you are conscientious, there is the necessity of remembering to do it at the right time (always a hard matter), so as not to cause disappointment at home by the delay. There is one value of the letter. It is an opportunity of taking a little trouble for another. Now we always get to love better those for whom we take trouble.

2. Next, one can often say in a letter what one could not say, or has not said, in speech. Now here is what will happen to you, not often, but sometimes. You will return here feeling you had been somewhat ungracious, or forgetful, or scant in sympathy, or unresponsive to kindness. Perhaps you wanted to say so, but you were too proud, or had not the nerve. Write it then. A word or two will show you want to amend the thing: a word of reference or enquiry may unlock a sealed fountain of affection. Some of us elders have doubtless seen a parent's hungry eyes of disappointment, when the right word has not come. "Will he not say he does care for me?" "Will he not tell me he is sorry?"

3. Lastly, something *always* true. The home-letter is the picture of your life at school. Try to draw it well. It is the weekly chronicle of it: take trouble to tell it fully. How are your family to understand and sympathize in your school life, if they have no picture of it before them? Small and not glorious are the weekly events of the boy at school. Perhaps. But the sense of a common understanding, a life shared, a quick and sure intelligence of what you are thinking and doing or suffering, and the mutual tendernesses which grow out of this,—these are not small, and they have a glory about them.

Later on, when you are in mid-life, and the generation above you is aged and ready to pass away, and you are stepping with a firmer foot into their place, you may long very much for a full and true heart-union with your father or mother in the quiet days this side of death. But you may not be able to have this just because you wish for it. A few years' breach of sympathy in early life will sometimes cleave a chasm, whose scarred sides will not wholly come together again. I have tried to show you one little way of making this sad thing impossible.

VII.

Experience.

2 Corinthians vi. 6.

"By pureness, by knowledge."

IT is not possible to see the significance of these two words in this place without knowing first whom St. Paul is addressing. Corinthian converts to Christianity, of course. The title tells us that. But which of them? For some were Jews and some were Gentiles. It is the latter to whom he has at this point turned himself, and what we have to remember is that these people were open to a special danger, that of falling back again into the heathen life, with its idolatries and immoralities, out of which Paul had brought them. They had but so lately come from that life, they had so many friends still living it, that relapse into pleasant vices was peculiarly easy: we, the children of a world long Christian, cannot easily estimate the strain on them. But besides this, the way back to pagan sin was smoothed for them by an apology for sin, a rational defence of it. Certain vices were not only practised, but openly justified: it was said that "Christian liberty" (St. Paul's phrase, never meant for such a use) was a sanction for the practice; that however well it might be for some narrow-minded Jew, brought up in strict traditions, to bind himself by abstinences, to avoid perilous society, and

to keep away from natural pleasures which he could not enjoy without shocking his uninstructed conscience, it was quite a different matter for the well-instructed, philosophic Greek, the man with an open mind, with a large understanding, the man, as they phrased it, who "had knowledge." *His* conscience was not hurt: *he* could take care of himself in this slippery world: he had reached a spiritual stand-point, and so was able to mix with the world and taste earth's pleasures, and in doing so only make himself the wiser, the more experienced, and give an illustration of the charm and worth of Christian liberty. Yes, and so reasoning and acting on that reasoning they had been living, some of them, such lives as brought on the Apostle of Christian liberty the reproach that his doctrine was the teaching of immorality.

When then St. Paul turns at this point in his Epistle to the Christians who were come out of paganism, and commends his counsels to them by telling them what personal claims he had to be listened to and obeyed—his patience in the work; his hardships, dangers, pains; his kindness, truth, integrity—we can see a meaning in this otherwise singular coupling of the two merits of pureness and knowledge. He means to contrast silently his example with the theory of these men that pureness could be dispensed with by those who had knowledge, that in the name of getting knowledge and experience men might touch evil, that insight into things and large-mindedness were not too dearly bought by a little defilement. These people could not deny (we may be sure Paul's enemies would have let us hear of it else) that Paul had lived uncorrupt: his chaste life could not be breathed upon. All they could have dared to say was that the Apostle was a narrow-minded Puritan, that he owed his cleanness of life to his ignorance of the world, and the fetters of old-fashioned,

stupid religious scruples. And this is what he denies. You shall not have, he cries, the excuse of saying that knowledge and purity are opposites that cannot pair, that I have had the one because I lacked the other. It is no unenlightened bigot who speaks to you of having mastered his senses; no, but a man who first taught men the large and liberal doctrine of Christian freedom, and who can read the world he lives in as well as the wisest of you with all your philosophies.

Those must be very right who say that human nature does not much change with time, between one age and another. For see if, in the matter we are dealing with, men are different now from the folk of Paul's day. No; as it was in Eden with Eve and Satan, as it was in newly Christian Corinth, so has it always been since. Men still reason that the forbidden tree is a tree to be desired to make one wise, that evil may be handled in the name of knowledge: only they use varying language according to their circumstances or age. One is an intellectual person, and he persuades himself on the authority of some emancipated modern thinker that *all* experience must be for good, even the experience of contact with what moralists call vice, that it must widen the understanding and deepen the soul. Another, without being very intellectual, goes after doubtful or corrupting literature, making to himself a vague excuse that culture sanctions this kind of thing, or that art may be pursued for art's sake, and "never mind morality." Another, a young man, uses such opportunities as he may have, or can make, to adventure himself in dubious company, to haunt the back-scenes, the discreditable corners of society, and tells himself he is only "seeing life," and having an instructive glance at its seamy side as well as its decorous upper surface. Yet another, a boy this, and scarce more than a child, lets a bad curiosity

lead him to hunt for those "evil communications" which, as an Apostle and the Greek dramatist agree, corrupt good manners. But the boy does not say this of them. *He* says, "He doesn't see why he should not know as much as others know." They are all in one story with Mother Eve, and with the liberally-minded people of Corinth. They are excusing themselves for touching evil by saying that they do it for the sake of knowledge.

But Paul says, "I commended myself by pureness, by knowledge." It is not true that purity means ignorance; it is not true that wisdom is learnt by learning about evil.

And Paul's example does not stand alone. The world's experience points the same way: the greatest in knowledge have not owed their greatness to knowledge of evil. The really great in statesmanship have not drawn their wisdom of the state from expertness in the rogueries and scandalisms and corruptions and coarse appetites of men; that has been the reliance rather of the third-rate man. If art or letters have been employed, and that even by genius sometimes, to eternalize human vileness which was only worthy of silence, still it has not been the knowledge of vileness which has inspired the art that lives, the words that keep these free. The greatest names are also of the purest.

I know it would be vain to argue this way with those for whom the pursuit of knowledge is not the temptation to sin, but only the defence for it, the hypocritical defence. Let these people call things by their right names. What they are seeking in the base literature, or conversation, or not, or society, is not the knowledge of evil, it is evil itself for itself; they are not enlarging their minds, they are gratifying bad passions.

But to anyone who is an honest dupe of the idea that there

may be a way to wisdom through experience of evil, there may be urged this homely consideration. In life, as in science or scholarship, we cannot know everything; we have to make a choice between subjects; and often the pursuit of one kind of knowledge positively unfits us to acquire another kind. The mind is subdued to that it works in. This is so with the science of sciences. The mind which has intercourse with the matter and the methods of what is ignoble, sordid, unclean in humanity, is thereby made more incapable of understanding the noble and the pure. Yet these things, humanity's nobleness and pureness, is what it matters that we should know: this is the knowledge which gives us the true secret of human existence, which gives such power as we are like to have of moving the world. That "the pure in heart shall see God," is not a saying only for monks and hermits and recluses, it is for practical men. He who sees God, sees man best, and best knows the world. The path of pureness is the path of knowledge too.

VIII.

The Value of Instinct in Religion.

Acts ix. 6.

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

TO-DAY, being the eve of St. Paul's Day, I have turned for a subject to his story, and I have thought that something worth our thinking over was to be found in the words in which he answered the heavenly vision which hurled him to the ground on the way to Damascus. To his cry, "Who art Thou, Lord?" came the voice, "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest." Thereupon, trembling and astonished, his mind utterly dazed and prostrated by the stroke of that wonder, Paul yet can find words, and they are, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

That the words he found were of this nature throws a most interpreting light upon the previous conduct of Paul, upon its real moral character. This is not the subject I am seeking to bring before you, but it does illustrate that subject. What we have to observe is that what Paul then said was said on the inspiration of the moment. There was no time for deliberation: if there had been, yet deliberation was not possible under the crushing shock of a vision which overthrew in a moment the whole fabric of his beliefs and purposes. Whatever word comes from a man at such a moment expresses

something independent of deliberate thought. We have a phrase for the operation of the mind, we say, "The man spoke or acted not by reflection but by instinct." By instinct. We have got past the way of thinking under which it was supposed that instinct was the mental operation of an animal, as reason is of a man. We are aware now that animals have some reason, and men have a good deal of instinct. We may not be quite agreed yet what instinct is, and this we may leave the students of psychology to settle; for us it will be quite enough to say that when we talk of doing a thing by instinct, we mean that the thing is done without thinking, or by a thinking so very rapid that we are not conscious of it at all. So when one says that St. Paul spoke instinctively, one means that it came from him without thought, or with thought so swift that it could not be known as thought.

Why does it matter to observe this? Because this shows what had been in his mind all the days and weeks before. The man who speaks by instinct does not think at the moment he speaks, but he has been thinking a great deal beforehand: that is why he is able to speak: his instinct is the fruit of a hundred or a thousand thoughts which have gone before it, a thousand little preferences, decisions, resistances, or yieldings. If St. Paul exclaimed by instinct, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" it was because, in spite of some, to us, contrary appearances, he had been day by day, hour by hour, aiming at doing the Lord's will. He had made a huge mistake as to what the Lord's will was: he thought it was to hunt up and bind men and women, and bring them to punishment for worshipping Jesus the crucified Man; and very probably a good deal of selfish ambition, of pride, of obstinacy, of the love of fierce activity had con-

tributed to the mistake. But through all this there had been a real, enduring, predominant desire to do the will of God. That was his spirit's fixed attitude; and therefore the moment he finds himself face to face with God, although that God is also Jesus, Whom he was persecuting, he has not got to *think* what he will say, it comes out of itself; the word leaps off his heart, like an arrow when the tense string is suddenly loosed. Out it comes; it could be nothing else than this, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

I am not wanting, except by way of illustration, to speak about Paul's moral struggle. My point only is that his cry of instinct was the outcome of his previous character, and that when *we* act or speak by instinct, that is the outcome of our previous character, and declares what our character really is far more truly than any deliberated speech or act could declare it.

In a powerful romance which many of us will know, George Eliot's Florentine story, "Romola," this fact provides the cardinal incident of the plot. A selfish youth is brought into sudden rencontre with a man, his adoptive father, whom he had bitterly wronged by a neglect, and whom it is most inconvenient for him to own. "'Some madman, surely,' said Tito. He hardly knew how the words had come to his lips: there are moments when our passions speak and decide for us, and we seem to stand by and wonder. They carry in them an inspiration of crime, that in one instant does the work of long premeditation." The words recoil upon the speaker's life in a curse of more and more evil-doing, yet they had been spoken without any deliberation. "Tito was experiencing that inexorable law of human souls, that we prepare ourselves for sudden deeds by the reiterated choice of good and evil that gradually determines character."

"The reiterated choice of good and evil," in little things, that is what makes us on sudden, great occasions, when there is no time to think, do the noble thing or the base. The truth may be used for a warning, or for an encouragement. Let us briefly use it as both.

A warning. Do not we sometimes find ourself saying, when fault is found with our conduct by others or ourself, "Oh! it doesn't so much matter: I should do the right thing if there were anything important to be done. Perhaps some of the little things I do at school are not quite correct and on the square; there may be some prevarications, some deceiving of masters; but then it is at school: I am really a gentleman and a man of honour, and I should never do a shabby thing at home or in the world when I grow up. Perhaps I am a little afraid of my neighbours, and I don't want to be unpopular, and so I give in to some things which are not quite right; but if it were a matter of principle and some great matter, I should be bold enough to speak up. Perhaps I have not been exactly generous, at least I am not by way of giving much to the Chapel offertories, but really, when what I could give is such a little matter anyhow, it does not signify: if there were need, I could give as handsomely as any one I know." No, that is just where you are wrong; it is your great ignorance of human nature. By that "inexorable law of human souls," if you are unfaithful habitually in that which is least, you will be unfaithful also in much, when the need of much comes on you. This "reiterated choice" of weakness or indulgence is determining your character. In the lightning fit of discovery, when you have to act by instinct, because there is not time to think, you will find out sadly what you really are.

The encouragement is the warning turned round. How

irksome, because so insignificant, are the thousand and one little duties, efforts, attentivenesses, which our life requires of us! Yes, but then also these "reiterated choices of good" on the petty scale "gradually determine character," and therefore prepare the great act at the great moment. It is tedious to be punctual, for what is a minute or so? Ah! but some day minutes may matter everything. It is a plague to be always attending: yes, but attention happens to be the duty which at school I am oftener called on to perform than any; it is love of duty which I am practising. It is vexatious to have to render a number of small obediences; but the spirit of loyalty is not a small thing, and out of such obediences it is bred. It is hard to be always practising abstinences from tempting things, here to turn away my eyes, there to close my mouth from speaking, or my ears from listening; but to those who will do so is the blessing of the pure heart which shall see God. It is tiresome to be diligent in private prayers when we are hurried or else tired, or in Chapel worship when it takes place twice every day; yes, but out of the many devoutnesses comes devotion, the instinct which, when God calls some day suddenly upon our name, will answer frankly, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

IX.

A Call.

St. Matthew iv. 18, 19, 20.

"And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him."

TO-DAY, which is Advent Sunday, and the first day of a new year according to the calendar of sacred seasons by which the Church has marked out the march of time, is also the day after St. Andrew's Day, a saint whom we must the less forget in a pulpit of this country because he is the patron saint of Scotland. The two occasions always fall near together, but they have more connection than that of mere unity of time. For the note of Advent is the summons to receive the Christ and acknowledge Him, and the note of St. Andrew's Day is the readiness to receive the call of Christ and to obey it. The Collect for his day and the hymn singles out this fact of his life as the fact which stamps him—he heard a call and followed Jesus without delay. St. Andrew is the patron saint of Vocation, the great exemplar to those who are called. So I ask your thought for that subject, Vocation, the calling of men.

To speak of a man having a call, meaning by call a call

from God, is a common enough form of speech. But the word is used in a restricted sense, which we had better enlarge. It is used of a call to a sacred ministry to be an ordained man, as if that were the only line of life to which a man can receive a divine call. This is what we ought to correct. God's call is a universal fact of Christian life; it is a thing which happens to everyone, an event in the history of the soul which, whether we know it or not, takes place always; one would like to say of it, what the Catechism says of the two great ordinances, that it is "a Sacrament generally necessary to salvation." As surely as God creates a soul, so surely He plans for it a course of life, a career it is to run, or at least a character it is to realize. That career, that character, are as much part of the creation of a soul as are the limbs and brain, the talents and the passions with which God's hand endows the soul which He creates: they are as much a part of that thought of God by which there is brought out of darkness and nothingness into light and existence a human being. God said, "Let there be," and "there was": the word God spoke when He said, "Let there be—such an one," was a word which told not only how the man should be shaped in body, and moulded in temperament and mind, but also what things he should do, or, it may be, endure upon the earth, what excellence or force or beauty of human spirit he should example among men. True, there is a difference. When God says, "Let there be—such or such a career of the man, such or such an example of character," we cannot always add, "and there was." The man so often does not do what God purposed, or become the kind of man God desired to see him. So often, nay, so always. But still the "Let there be" has been spoken: the call of God has been given: there is for every man a vocation which is divine.

To speak of God giving a call to *everyone* sounds, when we remember what men actually are, and how different from men who hear and obey a divine call, like one of those assertions in which by saying too much we say nothing. If to have a call means to be what people are, then there cannot be much in being called: vocation is of no value.

Well, but in spite of this same ordinariness and want of nobleness in human beings, we still go on (quite apart from religion) telling young people that everyone ought to make the best and most of himself, ought to realize himself, ought to fulfil himself, ought to be himself, and not merely a copy of his neighbours. What is that but a tame, prosy, timid, earthly way of saying that God has given, to every soul He makes, a career and a character which He wants it to fulfil?

Then if there is this call of God for all of us, how does it come to us, how are we to know that we have it?

One way in which it comes I will only allude to in a word. The holy rite which some of you are to receive this week is among other things this—God's call to a career, the career of a Christian man's life.

But I would rather speak of a call which is not generally counted a divine call, but which ought to be so counted. We give it the name "call," however: we speak of a man's "vocation," meaning his profession or employment. Is not a man's profession or work in life God's call? I will venture to assert that it is, that when a boy chooses rightly, and the man pursues faithfully his life-work, he is hearing and obeying a call from God, not less really than when Andrew left the fishing-boat's side to go with Jesus.

Let us think now of some of the things which we should do if we heartily believed what I have ventured to assert.

First, we should choose our path in life with more earnest-

ness. It is a path not for a mind and a body only, but for a soul. Surely we ought to be more serious about such a choice than some boys are.

Then we should choose it more religiously. It is not a thing only for a business calculation. It is a thing to be prayed for. When is a boy too young to ask the Heavenly Father to help him to choose his work in life rightly?

Then we should choose more hopefully and courageously. So many are unambitious, apathetic, wanting in adventure. Let us have courage. God knows a way of life meant for us: surely then He will help us to find it, and strengthen our feet to walk in it.

And we should prepare ourselves for it more diligently while at school. Lessons are often dull, and sometimes exercise is distasteful. But if we are going to have wiser minds and stronger bodies when the life-work begins, we ought not to grudge industry.

And we should expect guidance in our choice. It is God's call, not our choice: we are chosen, we do not choose, really. But this guidance will not be anything wonderful, much less supernatural, no voice falling on us from the skies. It will be the homely admonitions given us by plain facts;—what gift have I, and how much of it? what friends have I who could help in this field or that other? what do my practical circumstances, such as money, or the want of money, point out as possible to me? what kind of work seems to be congenial to me, and therefore likely to be done by me well, and not against the grain? In these things it is that we are to hear a voice behind us, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it, when we turn to the right hand or when we turn to the left."

Last, we should choose our profession as if we were choos-

ing not a way of making a living, but "a way of salvation," a way of life indeed. This, our profession, being the chief employment of our energies, mental and bodily and moral, being the chief means of contact with human fact, is our chief line of experience, of the knowledge of God, it is a man's quest of the vision of God, Whom to know is life eternal. Yes, and that vision (remember it, all you who want to be happy in life), that vision is the Beatific vision, the vision which maketh blest. To be walking in the way God meant for him—that is man's happiness.

I have spoken of call, of vocation, and, though I have made St. Andrew my text, I have said no word yet about the call which all agree is the likest his—the call to follow Christ as the minister of His Word to our fellow-men, the call to be ordained to a sacred ministry. Of this I have said nothing.

No, because I did not want to obscure that other truth which we have been viewing, that *all* God's calls of men are sacred, and that in *all* lives such a call there is. And now what I ask you to think about this special calling is—not how different from the other kind of call it is, but how like. There is a difference, no doubt; but the mistake has been to make *too much* of the difference. At a time like the present, when the supply of men for the ministry—and that not in one Church only—is growing scanty, and many who in an earlier generation would have offered themselves seem now to hesitate, it is surely a useful thing to say, before an audience of those who have still to choose their path in life, that God's voice is the same voice, to *whatever* profession it summons us. Whether it is a summons to become soldier or merchant, or physician or lawyer, or, again, a minister of religion, still His summons it is. And in the last case, as in the others,

there are things we should do if we believe that God calls men; they are the same things over again which just now we remembered.

We must choose with earnestness, for it is the choice of a career for a soul. And with prayer; for here is something other than a matter of business. And with hope and courage, for many nowadays are stayed from offering themselves by want of courage, fear of a venture (though any career whatever must be some venture). And we must prepare for it diligently at school, in body and in mind, for God wants for His special service men of knowledge, and also men who are men. And we must expect guidance in our choice: and here again (I beg you to consider this) the guidance will not be a voice falling from the skies, but the homely admonition of plain facts: "Do my circumstances mark out for me this course of life, do my gifts and natural temperament and leanings, do my education and the general associations of my life, does some congeniality to me in the proposed task point out the ministry as a life-work in which my soul could fulfil herself?" If the answer is a sincere Yes, then it is likely it carries for us the very voice of God, the voice behind us, saying, "This is the way." And last, we must choose as those who choose a way of salvation, a road that leads to the vision of God, and (again I say, remember it, all you who would be happy in life) that vision is the Beatific vision, the vision that maketh blest: it is your life's happiness to walk in the road; you will not find your life's happiness in another road, if this be yours; it is not open to you to take or refuse; you *must* choose this one, if you would find in your life that which maketh blest.

X.

Trinity Sunday.

1 John v. 7

"For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

Athanasian Creed 27, 28.

"So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity."

TO-DAY is called Trinity Sunday. And this Chapel is dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and this whole house of education has its name from the Trinity, so that here, at any rate, my words in the pulpit ought to be about the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity, for the affirmation of which as a truth the day was made a festival. But I have heard clergymen say that they always found it most difficult to speak to their people on this subject when the day came round. The doctrine of the Trinity, Three Persons and One God, is so abstract, they say, and so difficult to get people to understand, or even wish to understand: people want to hear of personal things and practical things, not about abstract formulas.

Well, the Trinity in Unity is a formula, no doubt, for it is a form of words. But I do not know why, on *that* account,

congregations should refuse to be interested. For the formula means God is Three in One. Now there is a much barer formula, namely, God is One, in which men have been interested to the deepest, I may say, the fiercest degree. In those words there was life and heat and force enough to make the Jewish race separate itself from all the families of mankind in an eternal spiritual hostility, to provoke them to slay the Lord Jesus as One Whose claims denied their formula; "God is One" was the fire which kindled the Arab race to its conquest and self-devotions. Yet, compared with "God is One," the formula "God is One and yet is Three in One" is a rich and full and almost concrete formula, and should have far more of interest and fire stored in it. Certainly in the fourth century it sent a fire upon earth and a sword, by the battlings within the Church, of which the Nicene Creed is a monument. But let this pass, for we will not talk before an audience nearly all young about anything which is abstract, except just so far as we can translate it into speech about persons and about things practical. Now the doctrine of the Trinity *is* about Persons, and it *is* about things practical. For to say there is a Trinity in Unity is to say there are Three Personal Beings, and that each of these Beings—the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit—is alike God, and therefore what They are and what They do matters everything to us human beings. This is to speak of persons and of practical affairs. Let us try to see what exactly it is that is spoken; then perhaps it will appear that whether we "thus think of the Trinity" or no, really matters.

The Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. Not one only of them, but all. There, however, comes the mistake of many people: they think that one of these is God, but not all three.

For there is one sort of religious man who thinks that God is only the Father. This man believes that there is a Divine Being Who created all things, and among them this man: and He is man's Ruler, and commands him to do thus and thus, and, if man fails to do it, He will punish him, and if he does it, will reward. But this is all which this man does believe about God—that He is Maker, Ruler, Judge. That is not enough: our heart is not touched by that. It is a grim religion which comes out of only that.

And there is a second sort who thinks God is only the Son. He has been told there is a Divine One Who so much loved him as to die for him, and so pitied him as to forgive him all his sins, and that he, the man, has only to thank and love this Jesus, and then all will be well with him, and this is religion, and saving one's soul. But this faith is not enough: it touches the heart, but not the reason: it ignores hard facts of the universe: it is a soft, unmanly religion which comes out of only that.

And a third sort thinks God is only the Spirit. What really saves men, they have told him, is the Spirit. Now the Spirit is an invisible thing, no man can tell whence it comes or where it goes, and one must not confuse any material things with it, for how can it be bound up with these? So, to live in the Spirit will be, not to act in this or that way in practical affairs, but to have fine and delicate sentiments about religion, or to be a philosopher, and have subtle ideas about the principles of life. But neither is this faith enough: it may touch the mind, but it does not touch the conscience: it is a dreamy, windy, weak-as-air religion that comes out of only that.

What is the fault in these three ways of religion? The fault is in all the same: the man does not hold the faith

of the Trinity in Unity: he believes that God is the Father, *or* the Son, *or* the Holy Spirit, not that God is Father, Son, *and* Holy Spirit.

But you here will be thinking, some of you, that neither of these can be your own case. "We have not yet thought enough about the Christian belief to make any of *these* mistakes: we have not yet reached so far a point."

Perhaps you do not know. Should you not say there are generally boys at school to whom religion means a duty, and a duty only, and that a disagreeable one. "One has to do something in the way of religion, such as saying one's prayers, and going to Church, and keeping the Ten Commandments, because there will be ill consequences." So this boy does something in the way of religion, no more than he can help, and only by way of penance for sin or an insurance against harm. Now to him God is Maker and Judge (for one cannot quite say He is Father), someone far, far away from him, not dwelling with him on this earth, certainly not within him. That boy needs to learn about the Trinity, for he has not found out yet the Son, Who was made as we are, and the Spirit Who is in us: he has not yet learnt that religion has another name besides Duty—the name, Love: and another still—the name, Joy.

And should you say there never came to school a boy to whom religion meant a bit of poetry and sentiment? "It is good that one should be religious," he feels, "because it brings one some pleasant feelings sometimes, I don't quite know how. One is touched sometimes by Church music and hymns and what some preachers say in the pulpit about the love of Jesus for us, and our being able to love Him." Then he comes away from Church and forgets to do some necessary duty, or he does something which is selfish or shady. It

seems that to him God is only the "gentle Jesus" of his hymns, the "tender, loving Saviour," not the strong God the Father, Who says to a son, "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." That boy, too, needs to learn about the Trinity, that besides a Saviour there is a righteous Judge, that religion is not emotion and poetry, but obedience.

And, thirdly, would you deny, on the ground that you never heard him express any such view, that there can be at school a boy to whom religion is principle but not practice? "It is good one should have religious principles, or, at any rate, moral principles," he says to himself: "one ought to have a good tone and right ideas and gentlemanly feeling, and be a good and refined sort of character: and I hope," says he, "as to that, I do not do badly. Certainly I am rather disgusted at the things some fellows will do or say, and I feel I look down on a good many more who are not so bad as these." And then, still warm with those reflections, he goes off, and passes a group of his schoolfellows in which one is saying a villainous thing, a shame and a depravation to listen to; but this boy who has so right a spirit, and so good and refined a sort of character—he does nothing, and says nothing, to get this wrong put right. That boy, like the other two, needs to learn about the Trinity: needs to learn that principles which do not take the shape of practice, and spirit which does not embody itself in act and life, are nothing; that as there is an invisible Holy Ghost, so also there was a visible human Jesus, God Who clothed His divinity in flesh of man, and acted the Divine nature out in the common incidents of a daily life.

"He therefore that will be saved, let him thus think of the Trinity." So run the words of that famous battle-chant of the Christian faith, the stern formula which is named the

Athanasian Creed. "Let him thus think of the Trinity."

Yes, there is salvation in such a thinking as we have tried to outline—in thinking that God with Whom we have to do is Father, and is Son, and is Holy Ghost; that God is strong and righteous and pure, and will not behold iniquity unangered; that God is tender and yearning and understanding, and can draw us with cords of a man, with bands of love: that God is a Spirit, at our side, at our ear, nay, within us, becoming ever more and more our very self: that He is not one of these and not the others, but is all the three. There is salvation in that. And this school of ours, which has taken its name from the Holy and Undivided Trinity, this school, if it will be saved—saved by that salvation which is a life pure and true and loyal before the face of God—must *thus* think of the Trinity.

XI.

The Spirit of Prophecy.

St. John xvi. 13.

"He shall show you the things which are to come."

WHAT a charm for the mind of man has prophecy! In what throngs men have always flocked to the shrines where it was reputed an oracular voice could answer the questions of men as to what things should come to them. How rich have been the priesthoods, deceivers at once and deceived, who have been thought to hold the keys which unlock the future. Yet we instructed people laugh at all this, and say the oracle-mongers were all impostors, and their enquirers all dupes, and that prophecy is not among the gifts of man.

Is there prophecy *anywhere?* I recall a simple saying, which stuck, I can hardly say why, in my memory. A peasant woman in a Swiss village, with whom I was talking on the morning of a departure, and saying, as one does, "Perhaps we shall come back some other year, but who knows what will happen to him in a year," replied, "Ah, yes, man cannot prophesy; that can only God do." But if God *can* prophesy, *does* He prophesy? Does He ever communicate to the minds of men the thing which will be next year, next month, even the next hour? Does He, even He, ever predict the future?

It looks as if once He had promised that He would do so. What means else this which Jesus tells His disciples, that when He, Jesus, has gone away, He will send them a Helper in His place, the Spirit of Truth, and this Spirit should show them things to come?

Did that Spirit ever do so?

Where are the cases of the future being foretold to the first believers? There is a tale of a certain Agabus, no doubt, who predicted a famine once, and again the captivity of Paul. But the second was an easy prophecy to make, and the first perhaps was scarcely harder: and neither, perhaps, and certainly not the second, was a practical help. Such things would indeed be poor fulfilments of "He shall show you things to come."

Nor, when you think about it, does it seem likely that prophecy, if it were a thing which played a great part in practical affairs, would be a blessing. People who reflect admit that our human inability to look five minutes ahead is a good thing for us. How said the lyric poet of Rome?

> "In darkness, from a mortal's eyes,
> God hides the future, *being wise*."

Yes, being wise. For if we knew the future, how bad it would be for us. How daunting it would be to have our coming life, with its labours and sorrows and pains, laid before us like a map. How daunting; or, if not that, how dull! For which of us goes far on into life and does not know the charm and stimulus which there is in brooding on an event which is unseen. "Where shall I be this time next year? What streets, what fields will be my landscape? What tasks will occupy my hands? What new faces of men, or, better, what new hearts of men shall I have for my com-

panions and my friends?" And yet again, how should we lose a discipline of character—the patience, the reliant waiting upon God, the trust in principles, that is, in God's wisdom and love, the faithful listening for His voice when it shall call us, the sacrifice of resignation to His yet undeclared will, howsoever and whensoever it shall be declared. All this we should lose. Yes, it is a *good* thing, that man cannot prophesy: and it may well be a good thing, therefore, that the Spirit Whom Christ promised to send does not show things to come, in the way, at least, of predicting them.

Then how was the promise fulfilled: how does the Spirit show us things to come?

Supposing we look at what actually happened. We do not hear much of the predictions of the Holy Spirit, but we do hear much of His communications to the followers of Christ. And what appears as we read the pages of the Acts is, that this Guide into all truth, though He did not tell them of things *before* they took place, did tell them what needed to be known as soon as things actually were taking place. Thus the Spirit did not warn Peter and John of their arrest and trial by the Sanhedrin, but did put into their hearts the courage, and into their mouths the speech, which that ordeal called for. And He did not warn them of the revolution which would carry the Gospel away from Jerusalem and the Jewish race and give it to the Gentiles; but He did guide the Apostles to admit to full Christian fellowship those Samaritans whom Philip had baptized, and that household of Cornelius to whom Peter was summoned. He did not predict the annulment of the Law of Moses, but He taught Paul to see that the Law was passing away and faith was taking its place. He did not tell Paul that he was to be Apostle of

Greece, but "the Spirit of Jesus" did. And, to cast our eye forward down history where the Bible ceases, the Spirit never foretold Constantine and the establishment of the faith as the empire's religion; but it showed Christians how to abound in power, as formerly to suffer want; nor the inrush of the barbarian peoples, but it taught the Church how to take reins from the hands of the lost state and to become the lawgiver to the new world. It did not prophesy the adventure of the Missionaries of Europe, but it put their Mission, when time was ripe, into the heart of Bernard, Boniface, Gallus, Patrick, Columba, and Augustine. It never said a word of an empire to be seated in two narrow islands and to be spread over the seven seas; but it is putting into the heart of statesmen and Churchmen in that empire, that God has given us this power and opportunity, not in order that we of Britain may be strong and proud and rich, but that, by the law and peace and Gospel which we can bring, truth may flourish out of the earth, and righteousness look down from Heaven upon continents of darkness and strife and cruel habitations.

This it is then that has always happened. The Spirit has not told men beforehand what they were going to do, but, when the time came for the doing, then the Spirit showed them what to do, and how to do it.

That is exactly what any Christian in any age may expect from the Spirit of God, Whom Christ has promised to him. We cannot, because we are Christians, look even five minutes further into the future than men to whom Christ is a name unknown. The Spirit will not tell us one hour in advance what thing will come. But, when it happens, He *will* show us what the thing is, and what we must do concerning it. He will not tell you, as you sit here, whether two or three years hence you will be at the University, or in a regiment,

or in a house of business; but when you are in these places or positions He will show you how to manage your life in them. He will not tell you that you are going to be prosperous or going to be disappointed in a future venture; He will tell you how to use the fruits of success, how to use the moral discipline of failure. He will not let you know beforehand the day which will rob you of a parent or a friend; He *will* clothe you with the force of mind and will by which you can bear the new burden of responsibilities, for your own life or that of others, which the loss may lay upon your shoulders. Yes, and every new day, though He will not, as you rise from rest, whisper you what event or labour or trouble the day is to bring you, He will surely whisper in your ear, as the hour needs it, how best you can face or solve it or sustain it. There is the pledge which any of us may dare to claim in the promise, "He shall show you things to come."

Now do you think this is rather a disappointing fulfilment? Is a Spirit which tells no event while it is future, but only how to deal with the event when it is present, is it nothing to us?

I will ask you to think how to any who believes so much, who believes in a Spirit Who inspires only the present moment, Who, step by step, stage by stage, phase by phase, interprets life to the spirit of the man, all his life becomes suddenly happier. "Take no thought for the morrow," it is written. Ah! but, how can one help taking thought, unless we are sure there is someone who takes thought for it instead of us, and in good time? And thought for the morrow—or, as men now call it, care—is the chief pain in human life. Here is the remedy. *He* will deal with the new, anxious situation, the new venture, the new persecution, the new dreaded

work or responsibility, the new life among strangers, the new life of self-dependence, the new competition against rivals: *He* will deal wisely with this: *He* will put the insight into your mind, the energy into your hands, the fire into your heart, by which your soul will have the strength to shape to-morrow's work, or, better, will have the wisdom and the love to be shaped herself by to-morrow's event, whether glad or sad, into more likeness to that Christ Jesus Who promised that He would send a Spirit Who shall show us things to come.

XII.

"Keep the Commandments."

St. Matthew xix. 17.

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments. He saith unto Him, Which?"

IF in studying the incident of the Rich Young Man, whom Jesus loved, but who yet made the great refusal, we stop short at this answer of Jesus, "Keep the Commandments," we cut the story in half. Now, generally, to cut a story in half is not to halve its meaning, but to destroy it wholly; for a story, at any rate in which Christ is an actor, is a kind of living organism, which lives only as a whole, and is dead if you divide it. The objection does not quite apply in this case: the story *might* have stopped here; the young ruler *might* have accepted the answer as satisfactory, and gone away to act upon it; it is also perhaps the only answer which he could have obtained to his question if Christ had not come his way, but, say, only some wise teacher of the time. The answer, therefore, "Keep the Commandments," is a valid one; it has a significance worth study, even though, as a fact, Jesus had a deeper answer yet behind it. So I propose to ask, what is for us the practical instructiveness of the reply, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments."

But, first, do we understand the young man's case? He was no hypocrite: let us dismiss that idea. He was not even (so I would think) shallow in his religious character. More likely he was one in whom the religious instinct was of the quality of a passion, though, as it proved, not a master-passion. He was rich, and that counts for more than perhaps you may all perceive: that he was rich was no doubt a cause of his great refusal, but I should guess it was also part cause of his great ambition. That is, he was, being wealthy, one of the leisured class, one of those who obtain the fullest education, and so have minds enlarged for the reception of spiritual thoughts, hopes, sympathies, one of those who are not so absorbed by the hard, immediate necessities of labour that they have no time or strength or spirits for letting the mind brood upon moral enterprise. So this man was not content with being in the ordinary way good, he wanted, if he might, to be great as well as good: he had moral ambition: he was in search of an ideal, he thirsted for a spiritual enterprise. Such is he, when news of the famed Teacher, passing through his little country town, comes to him. Jesus has spent the night there, but the young ruler somehow has not met Him. Then, in the early morn, as Jesus sets out on His journey, the youth overtakes his opportunity. Perhaps he had been dreaming that night, and had awaked with a sweet, vague, chivalrous longing for a nobler existence—such as young men do have at waking sometimes—and he remembers that the prophet may be gone too soon for counsel. Is he too late? No, but he must run if he would reach Him. So, running, he overtakes the party, and, to the surprise of the onlookers, kneels before Jesus to ask his question of questions, "What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

The answer was almost a rebuff to this effusion. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments." Had he thought and prayed so much and so long to be told *this* as the secret of life? Can the Master mean anything so obvious? This counsel must mean something more than appears. "What kind of Commandments," says the youth, "are you thinking of?" No, there is no mistake. The very simplest kind, "Thou shalt not kill, nor steal; thou shalt honour parent, and love thy neighbour." They are simple, these Commandments; but to keep them is to enter into life.

No doubt there was another counsel coming. But I stop here, because the counsel might have stopped here—nay, must have stopped here but for the good fortune of Christ passing through the young man's town—and still it would have been a true counsel, and enough.

To find our own interest in this story seems to me very easy. Our case is his. We need not have, as he, "great possessions" for that. We are any way "rich" in the sense which matters here: our being in this place of education means that we are of the class which is rich enough to have some leisure, rich enough to be able to postpone the time of work and prolong the season of education till we are seventeen, eighteen, twenty-three years of age: rich enough, that is, and free enough from early and all absorbing labour to be able to store our minds with ideas, to meditate our future, to have moral ambitions and ideals, to conceive of and hunger after "some good thing," some spiritual adventure. It is hard for those whose lot is early labour to think these thoughts: it is easy, it is natural, it is in many cases inevitable to think them, when we have leisure, freedom, and a mind trained to think. Then the counsel to this rich young

ruler is counsel for all chivalrous hearts in those classes which have time and ease and knowledge.

It is quite certain that to some of you will come exactly the impulse felt by this man. "What good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" You will mean, "What good thing *out of the ordinary* shall I do: what enterprise, what adventure, what rarer form of life shall I take up, that I may win some measure of moral greatness, or at least get beyond the average?"

The answer *may* be the call to something exceptional, possibly as hard to accept as the "Sell all that thou hast." But the only answer you can be *sure* of receiving is, "Keep the Commandments," which, being translated into modern fact, means, I think, "Do the duties actually before you: live out your life as it is: fulfil your relations toward this man and this who are in contact with you: obey the authority who is over you, help the needy who is at your door, do your day's work at the desk, the school-desk, be it, or the business desk; love your neighbour, that is, if he be your parent, honour him; if your friend, be loyal to him; if your dependent, think and care for him; if your pastor or master, obey him with love and sincerity; if your teacher, learn from him, with care, and, if you can, with sympathy; if your scholar, teach him your best, bear with him, take trouble, hope all things and believe all things for him." These are our Commandments: these let us do, and we shall live.

That is Christ's counsel still. And we have in reply to it our own "What lack I yet?" To us it often appears that the ordinary duty does not satisfy the moral ambition in us. "I have been doing all these things," we say, "fairly well for a long time, and now I feel that I cannot get any further along this road: I shall stagnate in this bounded sphere.

I am tired of always the same kind of cases, and the same people to deal with. I need new things and wider things to stimulate and keep alive my capacities. It may be that genius has the power to make common things divine, to draw a subtle magic of enthusiasm out of familiar circumstances: but I do not pretend to be a genius, but only to have capabilities, which would be realized if I had different opportunities and new. It may be that human nature, my own, and that of those I have to deal with, is an inexhaustible well of experience and interest; but I have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: I could draw much more out of shallower pools if I could reach them."

All this is generally true. I will not say (for it does not belong to my present scope) how Christ may hereupon say to a few of us, "If thou wilt be perfect, do"—something else and something hard; nor how we may like it little when it is said. But this is to the few. For most of us, "Keep the Commandments" will be the whole of His counsel. It probably is quite true that with larger and fresher opportunities we could do more; but also it is a standing fact of human life that opportunities are fewer than are the faculties which can use them: men must suffer it in the spiritual sphere as they must in the worldly. But in the spiritual there is the all-precious consolation that man can hope for a fulfilment of his being on some wider field to come, and that meanwhile to submit to the lack of opportunity may be in truth the soul's best opportunity, the subtle and fruitful trial which restrains a nature here that it may expand it elsewhere. God is able to practise a faculty for the infinite in a bounded range, to train under a single roof, and that a narrow one, the capacity which is to have rule over ten cities. To be patient and laborious under limited opportunity, to put the

heart into things which never were great, and now have grown smaller by familiarity, to go on seeking the divine in the common, and the heroic in the dull, is for most of us the very act of faith; is the keeping of Commandments, which is the entry into life.

XIII.

Effectual Faith.

St. Matthew viii. 13.

"As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee."

"AS thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." We are all well used to the idea that when God helps man, He only does it if the man has faith. Here there seems to be said just a little more. It seems to be said that there is a law of proportion of faith to result: so much faith, so much answer from God: more faith, more help. "*As* thou hast believed, *so* shall it be done." Do we think that this is so, and that we should have our wishes, if only we would wish for them so much as to believe we shall get them? And if we think it, do we act as if we thought so?

One cannot ask the question without being reminded that to know what faith is, is very hard. So far as I remember, no one has been able to form the phrase which will clearly and wholly express the meaning of those five letters which spell faith. Things have been said about it which are true and useful, but not complete, as that faith is the opposite not of reason (which has been vainly supposed) but of sight: we walk not by sight but by faith: that is, our conduct is, or ought to be guided by knowledge not of the visible world, but of the invisible. Then again I have seen it said (and a

most helpful saying it is) that faith so far from being opposed to reason is the power of *using* our reason, for it is the power by which a man when he has thought out a thing as best he can by the common mental operations, and has arrived at a conclusion, is enabled to *trust* that conclusion, to believe what his mind tells him is true, to do what his mind tells him he ought. But when the best has been said about it, faith is a thing you cannot really define. No wonder, for it is an act by which anyhow the human nature goes beyond itself, and comes into touch with God, and before it can touch God it must cross over the boundary of this merely earthly life; and yet from that earthly life we must needs borrow all the words by which we express anything at all. I say, we cannot define faith, try as we may, and we had better be content to think of faith in the homeliest way, and as the Bible helps us to think of it, by telling us, namely, a story about a man who had faith and used it, as this good Roman officer, who believed Jesus could make his sick servant well, and lo! as he believed so was it done unto him. Great was the faith (Christ had found none so great, no, not in Israel), great was the faith, and great was the result of it.

The story the Bible tells is the very best one to make us understand about faith—except one other story. That story is everybody's own story. If you want to understand about faith, then see what faith is, and what faith does, when it is your own faith, the belief of your particular single self.

What do you and I know about faith and its doings in our own present life?

I suppose we all think that there are things which faith can do for us. We act as if we thought so twice a day. For twice a day, and oftener if we count public as well as private occasions, we ask something from God. There is no

sense in asking things, and going on asking them, unless we think that by asking we get. No doubt we are very imitative beings, we men, and for some of our habits we could offer no better reason than that they are the habits of someone else, and we do as he does. Also when the prayer is public, we go to prayer, in boyhood, because we must; also when we get there perhaps we do not really pray; not all of us, or not always. Still here is this great practice of continually asking God for something, and it would not exist, one feels sure, unless at least most people thought there was use in it—that is, that if we ask, God gives. In other words, we think faith can do something.

Yes, but how much do we think it, how far are we sure of it?

Do not let us make excuses for want of faith by talking of the difficulties there are as to answers to prayer. Quite true, we ask for things which we do not get—a prize, a position, a release from trouble, a dear friend's life. Let us give the go-by just now to these difficulties; most of you see the solution of them. For there is a set of facts about which, when we pray, we ought to be absolutely sure of an answer: that set of facts is what we call Character. It is the largest and most important set of facts there is; and there is no difficulty about answers to prayer here. For we know God *wishes* us to be good: there can be no hindrance then to our becoming so, unless it be that we do not wish it, or do not believe that our wish will be given us.

Well then, how is it with us as to faith, at this beginning of a year, the time when everyone thinks new resolutions may wisely be formed and new starts made? How is it with us here? And first with us who are the elders, and who have to rule and teach and counsel and guide the younger. Per-

haps our work would prosper far more if we believed more. It is so easy for those whose work it is to deal with the lives of their fellow-men to think that you cannot make ordinary human nature any better than ordinarily it is: that "boys will be boys" in the sense of never being better boys, and nobler and wiser than as a fact boys mostly are, and that to hope for more and try for more is only needless fuss and worry, ending in disappointment. That simply isn't true: even men can, by taking thought and pains, be made better than they are: then how much more surely can boys? As we have believed, so shall it be done unto us who can teach and guide. Why, then, in God's name, let us believe.

Next, another group of us, you who were confirmed last month. How is it with you? It was a month ago: are you perhaps finding that you are not as good as a month earlier you expected to become? It may be so. And why? "As thou hast believed, so . . ." Now is it believing to treat your most solemn promise of last month as if it were a pledge given for a few weeks or days and then to be dropped—as some do treat it? If you will keep your promise, God will keep His. Try it.

And another group of us, how large a one! those who do not believe in their power of self-improvement. You accept the fact of what your character actually is, as if it were the standard of what you may expect to be. There is a kind of proverb about taking men as one finds them, and it sounds a humane and courteous thing to do, and perhaps is so. But to take oneself as one finds oneself is not courteous, or humane, or right, or wise: it is only mean. We must not do it. As we have believed of ourselves, so shall it happen to ourselves. Do let us, this opening year, believe better things of ourself.

Last, some—far too few, but some—wish better things, not for their own character only, but for the character of others, their friends, their fellows, the school. Why do you not get your wish? It is because you do not believe. You do not believe things can be altered: you accept the level of character that you see, you take your fellows as you find them: you think that if the common life is half-truthful, half-loyal, half-pure, that is about as much as can be hoped for: you do not believe that among us it is possible to produce a state of public character, under which treacheries towards the laws and the spirit of the school scarcely could happen, a state under which even those who had vileness in their heart *could* not speak a villainy in public, could not tell an ugly tale, or utter an abominable word. You do not believe this, not yet. But it could be. "As thou hast believed, so . . ." Believe, O believe that our life can be made like this, and it will be. Say we, each one in his own heart, at this new year's beginning, that it shall be so, please God, it shall.

XIV.

"The Thrall in Person may be Free in Soul."

St. Matthew xxii. 18-21.

"Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

TWO palaces look at one another, across a valley and an historic river, in one or both of which this verse must be often remembered. The two men whose seats of rule are in those two palaces, one a man exceeding old, one in still early life, must have, each of them, a different way of expounding my text, or certainly of applying it. The Pope of Rome and the King of Italy, and their palace fronts of the Vatican and the Quirinal, which face each other across the Tiber, where the ancient river washes the shore on which Cæsar had his home in the days of Jesus, this Pope and King and their rival houses are the parable in living fact of the great question debated among the Jews once, and debated in Europe to-day—are there things of Cæsar which are not things of God? It is a question likely to be as eternal as Rome herself is said to be. But also it is a very difficult question, this question of the spheres of the temporal and the spiritual power, of the authority of State over Church and Church over State: it is not one easily

discussed in a school pulpit, and it is one that does not need to be discussed there. If I have taken the verse for our text to-day, it is because I hope to find in it some instruction which will do for us who are no politicians yet, and do not care what people think in the Vatican or the Quirinal. Putting quite out of sight the historic setting of Christ's answer, except so far as to enable us to see that interest of it which is not historic, but human and universal, we shall find something here that teaches all times, and teaches people who know nothing about Church and State.

The question asked by the Herodians, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?" meant, if we forget the hypocrisy and trick of it, "Is it right that we who are Jews, members of the Covenant people, having the spiritual privilege and distinction of belonging to God, should have to obey the orders of the heathen? Is not this a wrong state of things, and ought it not to be amended?"

And the answer, divested again of its reference to the cirstances of the moment, seems to mean, "Accept the actual facts of your life. If you are under Cæsar's hand (as the coin you have brought appears to prove is the case), then you are under him, and it cannot be altered. Accept then this state of things, this supremacy of Cæsar, this presence of the Roman Lieutenant-Governor and his Roman soldiery in the land, accept it as you would accept any fact of nature, the sun that burns, the storm that breaks, the drought, or the flood, or the sickness, and do not murmur or uselessly fight against it. But remember that all the while you *are* God's people, you have the privilege of sons, and you can live the life of His sons and be free in spirit and in all the acts of the soul, in spite of Cæsar's eagle and the legionary and the tribute. Yes, you are the people of God's covenant, to you

was His promise made of a great doom and a leadership over the nations: and He has never recalled that promise, He will fulfil it, if you on your part will render unto God the things that are God's. Yours is the knowledge of the truth which saves the life of man, if only you would see it and love it: yours is the Christ, if only you would know Him, when He is in your midst: yours it will be by your teaching of the truths to bring in the nations, yes, even this proud, strong Roman nation which treads you down, into the loyalty to the Christ, your King, if only you would forsake this selfish dream of a temporal kingdom which never can be yours, but which blinds you to the Kingdom which is your own. Render, then, unto God the things which are God's."

Now the situation in which these Jews found themselves is nothing rare, but a very usual one. To be under Cæsar and have to pay him tribute—that is just the lot of every mortal who thinks his earthly conditions are an unworthy restriction of his liberty, and deny him the honour and eminence which he thinks to be his due. He who is poor, he who has been denied education, he whose chances in life have been few, he who is in a subordinate position, though capable of ruling, he whose merits are not recognized by the public, he whose luck is always bad, all these are persons in a case similar to that of the Jews who brought Jesus the tribute money. Their earthly and temporal fortune, their outward circumstances, seem an unworthy hampering of their inward worth. They are conscious, perhaps, of loftiness of character, perhaps of more than average force of mind, perhaps (they tell themselves) of something like genius; and they ought therefore to have a great part in the world, but as a fact they have only a small part. This is because they have no powerful friends, or are without funds, or lost an

appointment by being ill at an unfortunate moment, or simply had ill-luck in an examination or other trial of their capacity. It seems a shame that they should be treated thus, they with their great souls or their rare gifts, while some commonplace equal or even inferior goes past them and wins earth's prizes; a shame that they should be under Cæsar, under the power of this mere earthly, brute, unspiritual, intrusive circumstance of poverty, friendlessness, ill-luck, which bears down and keeps down those fine energies of theirs by which they know themselves to be God's chosen, fitted for His noblest service. It seems a shame, and not to be borne. How can it be right that souls of high worth should be slaves to this gross necessity, this unspiritual power of earth; should have to pay tribute to Cæsar, instead of being free and great?

The situation is the same, and the consolation which Jesus offers is the same. "And unto God the things which are God's." We must accept, He says to us, our mortal doom, the circumstances in which we are, the hindrances, disabilities, the hampering, overburdening facts which are the facts of our life. We must render that tribute to Cæsar. But also there are things which are God's, and to render these makes a life blessed and free and great. There is for each mortal also a spiritual doom: realize this doom, and you will cure your regrets over the others. Are you poor, and so forbidden many opportunities of distinction or of influence? Do not murmur, or covet, or make haste to grow rich: but bethink yourself of a spiritual world, where the rich man has no advantage of you, has no better means than you of seeing the vision of truth and bringing a brother's soul to see it with him. Are you ill-taught or ungifted in intellect? There is another field where your incapacities are not disabling, the field of character, the field of sympathy, love, brotherliness,

and help. There, it may be, a greatness waits you of which you have not dreamed. Are you one who always misses a prize, always gets left out in promotions, always finds another boy taken before him for distinction or privilege? Well, if it is a boy's case, the great world may cure it, for there the first at school are sometimes last, and the last first. But if it does not (and we must not count on its doing it), remember that the only "Well done" which finally matters is the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" which is to be heard only when earth's award of prizes is long over, and is no echo of those awards. Are you condemned to a place of subordination in life, so that you cannot work your own will, but are bound by that of others? Then remember a saint in his prison who cried, "But the word of God is not bound." He who will do true work and live life faithfully and lovingly, can put his will upon other souls by the touch which life always has on life: limited and subject as to the things which are Cæsar's, he has range, and freedom, and authority in the things that are God's. Let him render these things unto God, and his soul too will have its greatness.

Yes, render unto God the things that are God's. How pathetically does the fate of that Jewish people warn us not to miss the spiritual doom which is ours. They would not care for the greatness God meant for them, that moral leadership of the world; they would go on seeking to refuse tribute to Cæsar, and cast off his yoke. That was why the destruction came. We men are for ever imitating their folly, are for ever "blindly with our blessedness at strife." For each of us there is some blessed way of life, in which we can handle the things of God, and this way would lead us to greatness, our nature would realize itself, our soul would obtain its crown. But alas! the vision of some earthly object

of desire—some gain, honour, freedom, distinction, which never can be ours, blinds us to that blessed way of life in which God is calling us to walk, that holy, pure, heart-filling task, and so, for the sake of a prize beyond our reach, we miss the crown which was waiting to be ours.

XV.

Repentance in Good Time.

GENESIS XLII. 21.

"We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

HERE is a thing called Poetical Justice. The phrase means a kind of justice which is not generally awarded in law-courts, or met with in real life. It is that sort of retribution which gratifies not only our moral but also our artistic sense: which satisfies the imagination by its completeness, aptness, and picturesqueness: the retribution in which the wrong-doer not only gets his punishment, but gets it with an ironical fitness, as when in the same net that he hid privily is his own foot taken, when the villainous engineer is hoist with his own petard, or the assassin pricked by his own poisoned dagger, or the inventor of a new torture is made a subject for a first experiment. This is a kind of justice which is rarely found except in fiction, whence, no doubt, its name of poetical justice. But it is not quite unknown in actual life: just now and again human history is, as the saying goes, "as good as a play," and satisfies our sense of the dramatic. And this is the case in the tale of Joseph. Not the freest imagination could have made a more telling plot for a drama of timely revenges,

have planned a more apt and pregnant punishment for the cruel brotherhood than to place them helpless in the power of the wronged younger brother, whose power over their life and liberty is a true consequence of their cruel act. Had they not sold their brother for a slave he would not now have been the lord who could bind and slay, or loose and save them. Happily for the ten prisoners the justice they were enduring was as gently tempered as it was poetically complete. This was a merciful justice: within the punishment there was blessing too. And this blessing is beginning to work long before the time comes for Joseph's disclosure of himself, and the happy denouement of the drama. For, see, they have found out at last their sin. "We are verily guilty concerning our brother . . . therefore is this distress come upon us." How simple, how naive the confession is! "Now that we are in trouble we see at length how wicked it was to illtreat that poor boy years and years ago." What, was not that plain enough at the time? Does it need a divine punishment to persuade a man that to throw one's younger brother into a dry well with intent to kill him of hunger, and then, as a milder measure, to sell him away to the degradation and miseries of slavery, is a sin? And yet I do not think the brothers were exactly hypocrites. I really believe they had not known at the time that they were doing a horrible crime. They had told themselves that the boy was a graceless upstart, and deserved all he got, for being so conceited about his future fortunes, and for telling tales at home of the bad conduct of his elder brothers away from home. Slavery was good enough for him; and, besides, slaves were often very well off and happy: he might be that, if he would behave himself; anyhow there were plenty of boys as good as he who were sold for slaves. Some such things they had

said to themselves, until the horrible crime had got to look only like a bit of rough, irregular justice: and then, when the grief of the father (surely very torturing to these bad sons) had spent itself, time had laid its healing hand upon their somewhat smarting consciences, and Joseph had been comfortably forgotten. Suddenly, as they stand trembling here before a judge, who is their wronged brother, though they never guess it, and who, for all that he looks on with the impassive official air of the foreign potentate, hears and understands every syllable of their conscience-stricken talk, the light breaks in on them, the scene of wickedness comes stingingly back, they see what it was they did, they know the colour of their deeds. "We are verily guilty, . . . therefore is this distress come upon us." Surely it was a blessing, even at this very late hour, to know their sin.

Still it was a great pity that the hour was so late. Suffering is a wonderful illuminator of the conscience, but how much better if the illumination could have come before the sin, and have made the suffering unnecessary. That is the rather simple and obvious reflection which I wish to make on to-day's story of Joseph and his brethren. I want that story to make us all think of the marvellous power we have of deceiving ourselves at the time when we do wrong, and so of compelling God to make us wiser some later day by the sad consequences. Do you not agree that it is so? The idleness, which lost precious time and wasted a father's school fee, is at the time excused to himself by a boy as only a being in the fashion: the wilfulness, which makes the mind case-hardened against the better influences of the place, wears the name, at the time, of a manly independence: the greediness, sometimes even the grosser fleshly stains, are apologized for as only a bit of boy-nature: cruelty seems suffi-

ciently accounted for by saying one had once to put up with it oneself; while as for cowardice, this seems hardly to want any excuse, it is an amiable trait of ours, we do not want to make ourselves disagreeable to others. Ah! well. Time's revenges are sometimes dramatic even since Joseph's day. Some of you who quiet your consciences in these ways at present will find the scenes of school time come stingingly back on the memory, when you are realizing that you are walking in a narrow, obscure, ill-paid way of life, all because you are a half-educated man, through wasting your father's school-money: or when you feel the sins of your youth in your bones, and know that it is youth's indulgence that sowed them there. Or possibly as you writhe under the malice of some strong oppressor, or curse the evil counsel of a friend who has ruined you, it will occur to you also to cry out, "I am verily guilty concerning my brother, in that I tormented him in my hardness of heart; or worse, far worse, in my falseness of heart taught him the way to ruin: therefore is this distress come upon me."

What a pity, I say, to wait to find out all this so late, and not think of it earlier! Is not this just one of the uses of Lent? Last Sunday we thought of its use as a preparation, a time to remember one's destiny, God's purpose for one's life. Here is another and a sterner use of Lent. It is a time for repentance; seasonable, helpful, preservative, repentance. All the long year we go on blind to our faults, and calling them by gentle names which take in even ourselves; and because one day is no better than another day for enquiring into the truth, we never enquire; and presently Time lays his healing hand on any smart of conscience we ever had, and so we prepare sin's far-off harvest of sorrow. Yes, but here is Lent, here is our reminder, our opportunity. We must

do something to keep Lent; let that something be this: let us ask each one his own soul, "Soul, how is it with you: what pride, what malice, what cowardice, what sloth, what greed, what falseness are you nursing and do not know it? I will learn its true name now, I will know myself verily guilty, now while there is time to drive it out of me, and before distress come upon me to open my eyes too late."

XVI.

Youthful Hopes not Deceptive but Prophetic.

JEREMIAH XXIII. 5.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

"BEHOLD, the days come." Did they come? Did a King such as Jeremiah paints ever reign? He himself, the prophet, saw the last of the kings of David's line carried away to captivity, and there was no king any more in Judah (for who would deign to count a Herod) in the period of the restored nation's existence after a remnant came from Babylon, and rebuilt the ruined walls of Zion. Yes, true there was a King among them at last, and One who more than answered to the king whose lineaments Jeremiah drew: there was at last the Son of David, born in Bethlehem, reared in Nazareth, working in Jerusalem and Galilee. But then He did not reign, He did not prosper, He was not suffered to execute righteousness and justice in the earth, and to make Judah be saved and Israel dwell safely. You cannot then say Jeremiah's hope was fulfilled, that "the days did come"—unless you give him time enough, unless you allow his expectation to be one with yours. For you too say "the days come" (and in a week Advent will be here to remind us of it) when

a King *shall* reign, when Jesus Christ shall come, not in suffering but in strength, and execute justice in the earth. You, the Christian, say that. Well, let the prophet's looking forward be understood to be the same as our own, and we need not pronounce him a deluded prophet. He is right: the days do come.

Ah! you reply, but that will be a long time hence: those days of Christ are far away, if his prophecy is to wait for them. There is small practical value in a prophecy that will have its fulfilment only at Christ's Second Coming: it was little encouragement for people in Jerusalem, whose sorrows were so near and certain, to offer them a hope so very far and so very vague.

Well, I do not think you and I do much better than Jeremiah. Yet we, like him, are prophets, at least to our own selves, and we, too, tell ourselves, "Behold, the days come." I mean, of course, that we, all of us (for I hope I may say all, especially in a Chapel where all but all are young), we all have our dreams about what we shall be or do in the years in front of us. Some of us are more alive to the future, and some are more taken up with the present: some of us have bolder ambitions and some have tamer, some nobler aims and some less noble. But I suppose we all do, at least sometimes, cast looks into that blind future, the time "when I am a man," and make some picture of ourselves playing a part in it. We all say at times, "Behold, the days come."

And I ask, "Do they?" You, of course, cannot answer the question out of your personal experience, yet. But the common consent of mankind is, that they do not. By that I mean that while certainly something comes, if only you live, still the days you thought of do not come: your ambitions are not attained, your ideal of life is not realized, you do

not become quite the man you meant, or do quite the things you planned. Even if your manhood does achieve some of the boy's aims according to the letter of his resolve, the success turns out such a different thing, in your own actual feeling about it, is so far from bringing the triumph, the satisfaction, even the comfort which you were dreaming of, that you are ready, when you get it, to deny it is the thing you hoped. It may be called by the same name, it is not the same thing: when the days have come, they prove to be not the days you wanted. It is like to-morrow, which never comes, for then it is not to-morrow. You have no power, I know, of judging if what I am saying is true, for you, being boys, have not tried. But all mankind says it is true: and find if you can an elder who will assure you that mankind is wrong. When you prophesy in your heart, "Behold, the days come," you are no better prophet than was Jeremiah.

How shall we explain this error of young people which is as old as the race? How do they continue to hope and be disappointed?

The ordinary account of it is that this is Nature's kind plan. The world would not go on, people would not live their lives with any energy, if it were not that by a subtle machinery "hope springs eternal in the human breast," and every beginner in life is cheered by a grand prospect which only turns out to be an illusion, when it has done its work by tempting him to exert himself.

Well, it is a very wonderful machinery then, for it almost passes me to imagine how the deceptions can go on for thousands of years, and the old trick be played on us with always the old success.

Perhaps the account given, however, is not true. I offer a different one. I do not believe these hopes of youth, these

ambitions unachieved, these ideals never realized, are false. I do not think there is a deception. My belief is that our expectations are right; they inform us of a truth, they teach us what we can be and can do, they reveal us to ourselves. That we have in us an ambition to live greatly and not meanly is the way Providence has of telling us that to live greatly is possible for us. Like those instincts and impulses in the body towards physical activities and feats, which are really intimations of a capacity stored in our bodily nature, of which we might be ignorant but for the blind impulse felt; so these impulses of the soul, which we call ideals of life, are intimations of a power in the soul which can bring themselves to fulfilment. If we have a desire for a moral success in life it means that we are able to succeed; if we plan great things, it is because we can do them.

Quite against experience, you will say: most people have moral desires, but they seldom bring them to good effect.

Yes, I know. But I will tell you why. It is because there is not time enough, not time enough between cradle and grave, I mean. The days come, but they cannot come in time for human life, which is so short. Why *need* they come in time for that? Someone said, when advised to rest, "Eternity is long enough to rest in": let me turn the saying round, "Eternity is long enough to work in, long enough to complete our lives in, long enough to achieve our aims, long enough to win the soul's success." That is why our mortal hearts are allowed to beat with hopes and aspirations which cannot be fulfilled in the mortal term of years. It was not for a mortal term of years that God planned those aspirations: no, He made no miscalculation, He planned them for an existence in which they should have time to work themselves out; He gave them a mortal lifetime to begin their

work, an after life to end it; a time to sow, a time to reap, that the age which soweth and the age which reapeth might at last rejoice together: He meant us to have high hopes in youth because the deed before us is a high one, the deed (the only one which matters much) of making a human soul fit for the life in God. A human soul made fit for the life of God, by the discipline of obedience and love. Let our earthly projects come all to disappointment, let all our stately dreams be mocked by the beggarly fact, yet if in this stumbling, baffled, vexed, dejected, half-shamed existence we have begun at least to love God and serve Him, there is fulfilment, our hopes will be brought to fruit, and "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord."

XVII.

Nisi Dominus.

HAGGAI II. 4, 5.

"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work; for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not."

O you feel as I do about those words, when they come in our readings, as to-night they will, on this Feast of the Purification? They have always had to my own ear a most stirring ring, whatever might be the sense of them. It is like a point of war blown on a trumpet. One may be unversed in the significance of trumpet calls, and not know what is the military command which that set of notes delivers by the code of signal: but one thinks one could hardly mistake a call to arms for a call to retreat: the trumpet sounding the onset-call would not give us an uncertain sound, but we should prepare ourselves to battle. So the prophet's "But now be strong . . . and be strong . . . and be strong," does stir a man's heart, even if he knows nothing of who the speaker is, and to whom he speaks, and of what it is spoken.

But it is easy for us to know who said this, and to whom, and why.

Fifty years after the great carrying away of the folk of Jerusalem into Babylon, their conquerors were conquered by by a new king, Cyrus, whom the Jews loved to think of as God's shepherd, and, by his sympathy with this little nation, the door was opened for their return home. They came home, not indeed the whole nation, but a brave little colony of two score thousand people, led by Zerubbabel, grandson of Jehoiachim, the exiled King of Judah. They raised an altar to Jehovah on the site of David's ruined altar, and they laid afresh the foundation of the levelled temple, amid the pathetic scene of which the record touches every heart of ours, when the rejoicing shouts of the young mingled with the voice of mourning from the old men who remembered the glorious building now no more. And then—— Why then they behaved in a very disappointing way. There were enemies of their enterprise, the people of Samaria, half-alien in race, who, being denied a share in the work of restoration, did what they could to hinder it, employed obstruction, paid political agents to raise objections and difficulties at the Court of Babylon and get the work stopped. Upon this, Zerubbabel, and Joshua the priest, and, as we rather think, even Haggai the prophet too, lost heart and gave up the work. There was no lack of money to go on building: they were spending money freely upon private houses, houses in the best style, "ceiled houses," with richly-panelled walls. But they were depressed by the worrying obstruction of their enemies, gave up heart, dropped the public work of temple-building, and took to making their own fortunes and enjoying them instead. But then comes the revival. After years of stagnation comes this trumpet-call of the prophet, "Be strong, O Zerubbabel, and be strong, O Joshua, and be strong all ye people of the land, and work." There was

something—though the Bible does not tell us of it—which inspired this outburst. There were great events just then in the empire of Babylon, tumults and risings of conquered peoples, and restlessness among those who could not rise. These had reached the ears of the little Jewish colony, and the Jews read these signs of the times their own way. Was not this the promised earthquake-dawn of the Messiah's Kingdom: was not freedom and glory on the way for the faithful people of God? O then, if this is the Messiah's hour, let us rise and build. That is the strain that can be heard through Haggai's "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land." Yes, God was already shaking the nations, and presently Israel should spoil the heathen again as once they spoiled the Egyptians, and the choice things of all nations—their silver and their gold—would be brought in homage to adorn this springing temple of Jehovah. So the later glory of this house should be greater than its older glory. So sang old Haggai, filled with a glorious hopefulness in his old age: and his word was not in vain. The Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel and of Joshua and the remnant of the people, and they came and did work in the house of the Lord of Hosts, their God.

This story has been chosen for a lesson for this day, the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. It was chosen under a mistake, for the words which caused the choice, "The desire of all nations shall come" to the temple had no reference to the Messiah, and were no prediction of Christ's coming to His temple. We, then, must use the passage not for what it was thought mistakenly to be, but for what it is. What then is it? It is the story of an ebb-tide in a national spirit which turned again into a flow; the story

of people who grew weary and cowardly in well-doing, but then recovered heart and set to work again to build their national fortune, cheered by the hope that future times should be better even than the noble past which had been lost. The way to use the passage is the way to use all history—as example to guide or animate ourselves. How then?

The nearest likeness for ourselves to the duty and the hope of this Jewish colony will be a Christian's duty and his hope in regard to his city and temple, which is the Christian Church. That is a house of God which has still to be built. There are enemies of the building—world, flesh, and devil—man's pride and man's lusts and man's malice—which are for ever hindering the building up of this house. And we get discouraged, and think the world, with its selfish politics and love of pleasure, is too strong for Christianity, and we may as well let the thing alone. The best we can do, we think, is to dwell in ceiled houses of our own, to surround ourself at any rate with a refined, comfortable, seemly religiousness, and let the great world go its way, and the Church of Christ get on as it can. We are sure to act this way sometimes. Whole classes, whole communities act so, like Zerubbabel and his people. Ah! may we also, like them, listen to God's new prophets whenever they try to wake us with "Be strong . . . be strong, and work"; when they tell us that the shaking of the nations—wars, tumults, upheavals in East or South, atrocities in China, rebellion in Africa—may be God's opening to His Church of a nobler future, and that the choice things of all nations—the world's new philosophies, new discoveries, new sciences, which the timid men of faith so dread, are the silver which is God's and the gold which is God's, and all will be brought into the treasuries of the Church: that we are the children of a faith

which has not had its day, will not grow old and weak, and that the latter days of this house of God shall be greater than the former.

Or perhaps it may be to an effort for our national life that the prophets of the next age will have to summon us. Just now perhaps we are full of spirit and good hope about our imperial work, that secular and political house of God, our Empire. But after the flowing tide comes the ebb, and when you boys are men there may be need for someone to rouse your countrymen to nobler thoughts and ambitions about this Empire of ours, to more ready self-sacrifice on behalf of it, to more insight into the mission of good for human kind with which God has charged our race, and more zeal to promote that mission. May the notes of this brave old prophet have a power to stir you then!

And is there not a house of God nearer to your interest, both in time and place, of which we might think: a house to be built by us of this school. I do not quite mean the school itself, though I should not think the reference unseemly. I mean rather that invisible house of God, the life of our society, which is being built up or (which God forbid!) being broken down, by the lives and characters and conduct and ambitions and feelings of those who are the generation of the time being. Am I wrong in fearing that sometimes those who would be careful about their own character are not as zealous to help make the character of the body? Perhaps they give up trying to do so out of timidity, perhaps out of a feeling of hopelessness. But it is not right. To take care of one's own character only, and let alone the character of one's neighbours, seems to me very much like the fault of these Jews, who built and lived in good houses of their own, and let the house of God lie waste while they

ran every one to his own house. Do let us believe in the worth of exerting ourselves for the body: do let us believe in the possibility of improving things round us by those exertions: do let us live in Haggai's hope that the later glory of a house will be greater than the former, that a school's character can be made better, if only we are strong and work.

However, it is true, lastly, that whether the house we may be called on to help build be Church or Empire or School, there is one building which it is every man's duty to build, and his duty first and last. It is the house of the soul, that which in a now well-worn image has been called a temple of God the Holy Spirit. For this we are on earth at all, that we may build that house of the soul. But how apathy does overcome us in this work! How soon, after perhaps a not ungenerous zeal at the first, we tire of the task, and grow hopeless over it, and say the world and the flesh and the devil are too strong for us, and it is no use trying to build up this house of God: it will never reach any height or dignity or solidity: we had better give up our heroic ideals and content ourselves with being as comfortable in this poor human time of ours as can be managed. We can't ever be saints, so meanwhile let us at least be prosperous. This growing weary in well-doing, this despair of attaining goodness, is it not every one's temptation, at some time every one's? O but let us rebuke that weariness and faint heart with this old example, "Be strong . . . be strong . . . be strong, and work. I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts: I am the Builder, not you, of your house of the soul: My Spirit remaineth among you: *It* does not weary, it does not faint, it cannot fail. Fear ye not: be strong, and work."

XVIII.

Selflessness in Self-Assertion.

St. Luke xvii. 33.

"Whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."

WHEN last Sunday we were studying Christ's saying that "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted," and comparing it with the facts of the world as one observes them, and when we found that what Jesus had in mind was not so much self-depreciation as selflessness, it seemed to me that there was still something left to say, an aspect of the duty which we had not yet studied. What is it to be selfless; is selflessness only a forgetting and a foregoing of the self? And while I was thinking about this a few days ago, in a friend's house, my eye happened to fall on a motto, inscribed upon a bowl, which had a curious appropriateness to my thought. It was a motto in the Scotch vernacular speech, and it ran, "Dinna let yer modesty wrang ye." And I said to myself, "This motto, which so oddly chimes with my thoughts, must be a popular proverb; and proverbs are the record of true observations of life: I suppose it really is the case that a person's modesty may do them a wrong, else we should not have a proverb to say so. But how very different is the counsel of this Scottish proverb, "Never let yer modesty wrang ye,"

from the saying of Jesus, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Very different. But are they so incompatible as they seem? I ask the question because it seems to me a great mischief that we should be left in the position of having a religious faith commanding one kind of conduct, and yet a worldly wisdom, founded on hard, practical observation of facts, commanding the opposite. For this either makes us feel like hypocrites in professing a religious principle which we do not put into practice, or else it makes us doubtful if the religion can be really true which clashes so plainly with solid facts of experience; or at any rate it leads us to think of religion as a thing made for a few people, for saints and enthusiasts, and people who take vows, but not for merchants and lawyers, soldiers and clerks, and the common men of mankind.

Let us then be quite sure whether Christ's wisdom and the world's wisdom *are* in contradiction. Perhaps it is true that the humble is exalted, and yet also true that a man should not let his modesty wrong him.

Supposing we look a little deeper into that word which we said, last Sunday, was the right word for the humility which is exalted. That word was selflessness. What is it to be selfless? We all agree it means to give up self. But to whom? The answer must be that we give it up to God. To God, not to any man. That self of yours, that mysterious, indescribable thing, but which yet you know better than you know all the world beside, that power which can think and feel and do, that being which has a will and a character and a work and a doom, it is the property of God, for He made it. You hold it as in trust for Him. When you give it up, as we say, you give it up to His use for it,

you do not destroy it, you do not drop it into an abyss of nothingness: it will exist as much as ever, it will have as full and strong a life as before, nay, a fuller and a stronger; only whatever now it thinks and feels and does is for His purposes. But His it is, not any man's. Therefore for Him you must keep it and guard it, you must be jealous for it and preserve it intact, you may not let it be trenched upon, trampled on, diminished, being His, not yours, much less the other man's, who would trample on it? You may not "let your modesty wrong you" in such a way as that.

Now have we not found what we wanted? Is not this the point where the world's wisdom, that modesty must not wrong us, and Christ's wisdom that he that humbleth himself is exalted, come together and are one? We have to give up self—for it is God's; and we have to stand up for self—also, for it is God's. And Jesus has found for us the proverb which unites the two, "Whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."

Then let us see how this works out in practice, that is, how we ought in consequence to behave in matters where self is in question. I name some of these matters,—our personal rights, our personal dignity, our ambitions.

Our rights, then. Someone wrongs us, defrauds us, say, of money, debars us from our privileges, or assaults our person. Are we to take it quietly? Well, first I remember that Jesus Himself, that Jesus Who said, "Turn the other cheek," yet, when the High Priest's officer struck Him, replied with, "Why smitest thou Me?" Did He not mean that there is a thing called justice, and that justice ought to be maintained and spoken for, even if the injustice is done to oneself. Am I to see God's law of justice broken, and not rebuke it because the knavish man robbed *me*, because the brutal man

struck *me?* I think not. There are exceptions doubtless, moments when even grave wrong should go unpunished. May we have the grace to discern them when they come! But on the whole we seem bound to stand for justice, and not allow a wrong to be done upon a self which you hold in trust from God. That may mean that you have to give a peace-breaker or a cheat into charge of the police; or again, that if your schoolfellow strikes you wrongfully, you may do the best for both if you return the blow. Then what becomes of our Christianity? Oh there is a place for that in it. It is quite possible to "smite him friendly," to defend oneself just far enough to get justice restored, not far enough for revenge. He is the Christian who knows where to stop, who knows when he is protecting for the sake of right an injured self, and when he is only gratifying a human anger. To draw the line is hard: but so are most Christian things.

Then personal dignity. Ought we to pocket an insult, ought we even to be silent when we are put out of our proper place? Yes, sometimes, I believe, but sometimes only. More generally we must do what is good for the affronter. He has committed the offence of insolence, or at any rate he has made a mistake as to what is due to you. Why should he be left in his mistake? Put him right: quietly, without heat or bluster, but put him right, for the sake of truth and correctness, not because you smart under a slight. And then how often comes the case in which a man's personal dignity is part of his social usefulness: I mean that he cannot do his work without it. Where would be the authority of a judge, and therefore where his usefulness, if his person were not compassed with sacredness? That is true of lesser people than His Majesty's judges. Remember this, all of you, who are or will be in any authority here. To assert yourself,

not because you are you, but because you hold an office and exert an influence, is not conceit or assumption: it is duty, and at times a hard one. Very often, or I know nothing of such things, to assert yourself is the most difficult and painful self-denial, and calls for all the unselfishness that is in you. At such times we are very willing to let our modesty wrong us: but we must not let it.

Lastly, how about our ambitions? How are we to harmonize our desires to get on and be something with the maxim about the humble being exalted?

I see in the world a law which is called the struggle for existence. For most men it is that struggle for bare existence which we call working for one's daily bread: for a few it is that struggle for an ampler existence, which we name ambition. Each is God's law: each is for the purpose of developing His creature, man, into higher excellence: for it is the fear of hunger which makes ordinary men exert themselves, and "fame is the spur which the *clear* spirit doth raise" to exertions of the loftier kind. In each case the law of struggle, this competitive system, brings temptation, the temptation to push or trip or trample on the brother struggler. For all that, the law is God's law. Therefore our Christian duty is not to withdraw ourselves from competition, but to compete unselfishly; to yield ourselves to the law of struggle, yet not to yield ourselves to its temptation; to try to realize ourself in the world, and yet to put that self always at God's disposal. That means, in terms of actual life, that in worldly things we will not be lazy nor cowardly, but will offer for work and accept adventure, but all the while we will not scheme or intrigue, not envy or supplant another. And it means in spiritual things that we will be humble and we will be daring too; we will be little in our own eyes, know-

ing how miserably we come short of the nobleness, the purity, the love which God put within our nature's reach, and yet we will plan for our character great things and high, and trust God to bring them to pass in us, and never "let our modesty wrong us," and persuade us to give ambition up.

XIX.

Coming Down to See the Battle.

(October 15th, 1899.)

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1 Samuel xvii. 28.

"I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle."

I HAD meant to-day, as other Sundays, to choose something for consideration out of the Scriptures of the Sunday. But after I had chosen my subject, there happened a public event, and I know that all thoughts and feelings of ours are caught and drawn up into the current of that great excitement, just as a fierce fire upon the hearth draws all the airs round it into the up-draught that rushes up the chimney. Our thought and heart is caught and sucked up into the vortex of this sudden blaze of war. Every other human interest among us will for a time be displaced by this absorbing interest: politics, books, art, even business will for most part of our nation lose their vividness for a time. And therefore on this Sunday morning it seems the wiser course not to ignore the matter we are all caring about, as if it were an unspiritual, week-day thing which should be put away, like a child's toys or his father's ledger or spade, upon the Sunday, but rather to see if the Sunday has not a use of its own for this enthralling human

interest, to see, in fact, what Christianity has got to say about a war and the part we Christian worshippers have in it.

So for text I take the story of a boy who went with eagerness to look on at a war, and whom his elder brothers scolded for doing so. For we are most of us very like David so far. We do not, like him, come in from the country to the camp, and run forward to the front to ask the soldiers there what is being done, and who is that enemy, and what is the chance of beating him. But we do the same thing when we run to look at the morning telegrams, and devour the news of armies moving, and all the grim preliminaries of blows and blood. So I ask what is the right or the wrong of this eagerness about a war. If war is the horrible and wicked thing which some parts of the Gospel teaching seem to declare it, is the interest in it an unjustifiable instinct, natural, but to blame? Are we who feel it to be reproved as David was chidden by Eliab, for the pride and naughtiness of our heart, because we come down that we may see the battle?

Of course, I exclude from consideration one reason of our interest in war, the fact that the fortunes of our country depend on its issue. If love and care for one's country are lawful feelings, then this interest needs no defending. Still less does that other interest need defence which leads us to the brink of battle, as it were, to overlook the field of combat on which our kindred or our friends venture their life: and we here have some of us kindred there, and some of us friends, and this whole school has those of its number who are now there. It is no pride or naughtiness to come down in spirit to see their battle, and speed it with our yearning prayers. What I mean is, to ask whether that almost universal impulse to look on at war, be it of friends or strangers, that kindling of the spirit which the expectation

of deadly combat gives, be a legitimate feeling, or one which a Christian is bound to condemn and repress. To put it in a brief and expressive way—we think it a blameful thing to find pleasure in a bull fight: can it be right to feel a stimulus from a spectacle of incomparably greater horror and costlier expense of life?

And my answer would be that there is a way of looking on at battle which is sin, and a way of looking on which is not innocent only but even for the heart's good.

A way of looking on which is sin. If any one of us is going to watch the cruel spectacle now opening, with mere delight in the vivid but gross sensation which is called the love of horror, or even, more accurately, a blood-lust: if any one is going to flame with hate against blameworthy but ignorant and misguided enemies, whenever our countrymen suffer loss at their hands, or is going to indulge a coarse, brutal elation if our countrymen succeed, and, still worse, take a yet coarser satisfaction in a vengeance inflicted on them,—then he is looking on in the pride and naughtiness of his heart, and he may call his feelings natural and human if he likes, but he must not call them Christian. Doubtless the Sermon on the Mount must now, and for many a long year, be treated not as precepts for literal obedience, but as ideals, to be fulfilled so far as other men allow us. We cannot quite turn the other cheek, I know. We cannot, if our neighbour the Boer takes our taxes from us, also let him take our freedom; or, if he smites us with his policeman's club, invite him to smite us with his bullet. But the follies and wrongs of these men do not blot the page on which is written, "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you," aye, pray for

them, even if we must also pray that the hands of our friends and kin may smite them down.

But there is a way of looking on at war which not only is no sin, but is for the heart's good.

I best express myself if I say that the spectacle of war may do us good as the spectacle of tragedy does us good. Some of us here know how that last is. Long ago the Greeks told us how. Tragedy, they said, works in us a purification of the emotions by the action of pity and terror. That means, I believe, that when one of us looks on at a play in which we are deeply moved by the sufferings depicted in the drama, the sight of those great sorrows, those giant pains, makes our own petty private griefs or anxieties shrink into their true proportion: the scale of things is suddenly altered for us; the miserable worry which seemed so big that it filled heaven and earth for us has become no bigger than a mole-hill, the selfish desire of a gain which left no room for other hopes or interest in our heart, looks ridiculously small beside the vast issues for which a tragic hero strains, and dares, and perishes. Thus it is our emotions are purged by tragedy.

And even thus may they be purged by the tragedy of war. Whatever else is true of war, this is true: it is the thing into which men put the best and the most that is in them: in it human nature is seen at its highest strain, at its noblest, and perhaps, too, at its vilest, in its fiercest selfishness and its purest self-sacrifice, in its most frenzied horror and most inspired heroism. That is the spectacle of war, the spectacle of man doing his most and best. Now if we are drawing to the edge of the hills to look over on to that seething hollow where men are doing their utmost for life and honour, that on our safe heights we may read the lesson for our own life of the grim thing passing there: if the sight of these

men carrying into the furnace-breath all that is dear to them on earth, dying, some of them, that a comrade may live, or certainly to save a good and an honour which is not their own but their country's,—if this sight makes us ask ourselves, "What do *I* venture, what do *I* sacrifice for the love of my neighbour?" so that our selfishness is ashamed and withered at the touch of these unselfishnesses: or again, if the pity which wrings us at the sharp or the lingering pains of brother men, fight they for us or against us, or at the heart-break of the widow, or the desolateness of the child made fatherless, if this pity makes us know the realities of earth, know the wretchedness of human existence, and the one sole consolation of them, know the cruelties of human passion and the one divine cure of human hates, know the curse of sin and the blessedness of the cross, and if, under the touch of that pity, our faith in the only hope of man, Christ, the Prince of Peace, quickens in our breast, and pushes our worldly ease and carelessness away—I say, if this is what we get from the spectacle, then no more excuse is needed for coming down to see the battle. We can say with David, "Is there not a cause?"

A fortnight ago I was remarking, when a different subject was occupying our mind, that the passing events of history were great educators. They must be most so when they are events of our own nation's history. Then, more than at other times, may we expect that the Spirit of God, Who is the Interpreter of all God's teaching, will enlighten our minds to understand the spiritual lesson of the events which shake our world. Is it much to say that many a character among us may draw an influence lasting as life from the pity and terror, which can purify the soul of those who come down to be spectators of this harsh tragedy of a war?

XX.

Death in Battle.

(October, 1899.)

St. Matthew xxvii. 42.

"He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

THE reason why I have chosen these words for a text to-day, is that they came into my mind as if to interpret something which at the beginning of the week I was reading in a newspaper. That something was the story, the piteous-glorious story, a very old one in our national records (God be praised therefor), of officers leading on their men up deadly hill-sides, and courting in their own persons a tenfold risk, because where his officer does not refuse to die the soldier will not refuse to dare. Over one such case in special, where the narrator told how the leader was shot down while he made his men seek the shelter which for himself he rejected, I could not but murmur to myself, "Yes, it is always like that: he saved others, himself he could not save." The words were said of Jesus, dying on the Cross Himself that the portion of us all might be salvation and life: but see how they are true also of a mere man, one of ourselves, to-day, who on the battlefield saves others by not saving himself. Is it not a

suggestive fact, and worth our thoughts, that the same words will fit the death of Jesus of Nazareth and of an English officer?

Certainly the fact *is* suggestive, for that must be a very deep-founded truth about human life which can be seen in cases so far apart in time, and in moral value, as the death on Calvary and a death in Natal. All truths have times when they can best be learnt: their opportunity comes not any day but some day: surely for this truth these present days are an opportunity.

For I can hardly doubt that in these days there must be pressing upon the minds of most of us a certain mystery in human things which commonness does not make less mysterious,—the mystery which specially underlies the profession of soldier, and gives that profession, in every age, a high dignity. It is the mystery of one man giving his life for others, saving others and not saving himself.

The way in which we feel this most is perhaps a something very like self-reproach, which visits our hearts when we read of men laying down life in battle while we are living comfortably at home. Why should we be comfortable and safe, and these men toil and die?

An American poet expressed the feeling for us a generation ago, as he bent to read the lettering on a nameless grave.

"'A soldier of the Union mustered out'
Is the inscription on an unknown grave
At Newport News, beside the salt sea wave,
Nameless and dateless; sentinel or scout
Shot down in skirmish, or disastrous rout
Of battle, when the loud artillery drave
Its iron wedges through the ranks of brave
And doomed battalions storming the redoubt.

Thou unknown hero sleeping by the sea
In thy forgotten grave, with secret shame
I feel my pulses beat, my forehead burn,
When I remember thou hast given for me
All that thou hadst, thy life, thy very name,
And I can give thee nothing in return." *

"With secret shame." It is with hardly any other feeling that one thinks of death in battle. A boy has left his school perhaps but two or three years, and all is going on at his school just as always; older and younger we are leading our free, varied, animated, happy life, with the hope at least of our threescore and ten years under the sunshine; and he—one morning the bugle blows early, and the men form up, and the advance sounds, and out of the war-cloud on the fronting hill-top comes a blast, and there lies a blithe schoolfellow, a huddle of bones, and earth is nothing now to him, or he to earth.

This spectacle then of death in battle, this mystery of a man saving others by not caring for himself, has, I think, at least these two thoughts for us. One is the thought, Why should these things be? The other, What therefore shall we do?

Why should these things be? The only reason I can name will possibly not seem a reason to you, and to give it is certainly to explain a mystery by a mystery. It is the reason which is given by pointing to the Cross where Jesus hung on Calvary. Why did this Jesus save others and not save Himself? We answer, because it is a law of this universe, a law as deeply based, we think, as the world's foundations, and older than the morning stars, that only Sacrifice can save. If ~~you~~ nor have ~~any of you~~ thought of Jesus as dying on the

* Longfellow. "A Nameless Grave."

Cross because God had by a special and arbitrary arrangement decreed that this act should obtain pardon for men, then enlarge your ideas: think of that scene on Calvary rather as the grand example of an event for which the whole earth and all the ages are the stage. Christ died for men because the salvation of mankind is always and everywhere and in all things a life given to God. As the heavens are kept in their place and order by the law we call gravitation, even so the moral life of man is saved and brought towards perfectness by the universal law which we name sacrifice. All givings up of a life to save others while itself it cannot save, are examples of the great world-law, are parts and fragments of the vast divine event which was shown to man's eyes by the scene we watch on Calvary. I do not say we can understand this: I know we cannot. But I do say there is some good in pausing for a moment, as we tread in imagination the dreadful plot of mortal combat, where the loved one of our own or others lies, to look up to the Cross, and tell oneself that whatever interprets that wondrous death, is the interpretation also of this one.

What therefore shall *we* do? How shall we ease ourselves of that secret shame, that this man should give his life for us and we can give him nothing in return?

There is nothing for us except, at a distance, to imitate. But this imitation is more possible than perhaps some of you suppose. For courage in battle, which sometimes we think of as an incomprehensible thing, is really just a form of unselfishness. Sometimes, very, very seldom, it may be a kind of physical energy, an instinct which finds a kind of pleasure in the risks of war. Practically it is simply unselfishness—that is, the preference of the good of one's nation or one's regiment to one's own private good. The part played by

discipline, by social tradition, and the disgrace with which cowardice is punished, do not alter this substantial truth, that courage is unselfishness in times of danger. But unselfishness is a thing demanded by Christianity from all of us, from the most unwarlike stay-at-home as from the hero who fights and dies over sea. Daily are you asked to be unselfish, to save others by not saving yourself: to show kindness to your neighbours even if it costs you trouble, at the very least to abstain from adding to his burdens by unkindness, by pushings aside and worryings and acts of contempt: to care about the public good, that is, the school's, and not about advantages only to yourself: to give something out of your own store in weekly charities: to be ready to brave a little dislike—here perhaps is the best soldier-chance for you—(if need be, as need sometimes is) by opposing wrong-doing which is popular, or at least is not opposed by others. These are our ways here of imitating, at a humble distance, the one-time boys at school who died a week ago at the head of their soldiers. And I do verily think that it is not idle to bring together things so different as these hero deaths and these little matters of our own soldiership. Those shining examples are able to cast a beam upon these inglorious little acts of ours, and show to us what high and glorious kinship our petty unselfishnesses have: and to see this will make us braver soldiers to save others by not saving self.

XXI.

The Blessing of Peace.

(June, 1902.)

PSALM XXIX. 11.

"The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will give His people the blessing of peace."

THE blessing of peace, the curse of war—how familiar are the expressions! What a commonplace that peace is a good, that war is an evil! Millions of public speeches by public men, millions of wise articles in newspapers, have been telling us since the day when first this glorious Psalm of storm and battle rang to the harpstring of a Jewish minstrel, how war is a scourge, how peace is a blessing. It must be true, for everyone says so, and it has been said always. And yet ——

Look back from last Monday evening, when we chanted the grand music of this Psalm over a war ended and a peace signed, look back over the two and thirty months to the time when we heard of an enemy crossing our border, and waited with quicker heart-beats for news of the clash of armies: look back and remember all—the dreadful hush before the storm broke, the uplifting of the heart at the tale of the first gallant deeds of arms, and the news that the island soldiers

were still what they had ever been; the tremors at home when the circle was drawn closer and closer round our beleaguered fortress: the dreadful December week, when blow and worse blow and worst blow fell on the nation's heart like hammers: the New Year's Sunday with its brief scaring word of the desperate battle under the cloud with issue unknown, when the first of our own soldiers fell: the hopes of rescue that rose and were flung to earth again: then the great bound of the heart when there and there we burst the fence of enemies, and victory went rolling on towards the goal. Look back at these terrors and these sorrows, and the glad self-discovery by them of strength and sternness and endurance and self-devotion in an ancient people long left untried: look back at the spectacle of our youth that "offered themselves willingly among the people"—schoolfellows, friends, kinsmen of our own among them, gone freely out to war, coming back from it with the stamp of a new and nobler manhood upon face and bearing: look back at the spectacle of an empire chastened, schooled, hardened, knit together, set on fire, taught of its perils and follies, taught also of its unimagined powers, taught yet again, God grant it! of its opportunities and its high destiny:—look on these things, and say then whether war is in truth an evil and a curse.

That is not all. Are we even sure that if war is only a doubtful curse, at least peace is an undoubtful blessing? Half a century ago a poet drew the portrait of Peace, as he believed he saw her then, and to him she was

"Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,
When the poor are hovelled and hustled together, each sex, like swine,
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;
Peace in her vineyard—yes! but a company forges the wine."

Peace like that is no blessing. But you will say this must have been a bad peace, a corrupt peace, and an example by which we must not judge. Well, but, as we look closer, there comes in view this singular fact, that what we call peace is not peace, if peace means the contrary to war, the absence of strife. There is peace, or so we call it, between the nations of Europe at the present time, but these nations are none the less fighting each other very hard, to get each for itself the good things of earth instead of the others getting them. We call this industry and trade, not war, and there are no bullets and gunpowder used; but if a nation is beaten in this economic struggle it suffers, and if it were beaten badly enough it would starve, which is exactly what happens to armies if, when beaten in the field, they will not surrender. There is peace, at almost all times, within each several nation, and the citizens do not visibly hurt and destroy one the other; but there is a thing called competition, in which every one has to match his strength of body or his wits against rivals, and if he fails too completely in this struggle he cannot win his daily bread, and he starves; and if he starves, he dies, which is just what happens in war. So it would seem that peace, whether it be a blessing or no, at any rate is not peace, but war again, with some difference in the stakes played for and in the rules of the game, but still war.

So that the old-established ideas that war is a curse and peace is a blessing suffer much confusion, when we look close at things.

But perhaps our ideas may clear again, if we look closer yet. For it may prove that war in itself is neither a curse nor a blessing, and peace in itself is neither a blessing nor a curse, but that there is something deeper than either, and it is this something which makes each of them to be a good,

or, if that something is away, then, instead of a good, an evil.

What makes war a blessing, whenever it is one, is quite easy to see. It is this. War is the necessity for unselfishness. All the operations of war consist, if you trace them back, in giving up yourself for the sake of others. The citizen at home pays the war tax, the parents pay the blood tax of their sons gone to war, those sons leave home, endure long marches, scanty food, cold night-lodging on the veldt, and then in the morning expose themselves to extinction by a bullet through the brain. In that last is the explanation of all the rest. They consent to die—for the good of other people, their nation. They consent to die. We talk about soldiers' valour, as if men really went into battle for the pleasure of it—as perhaps a man here and another here really does, as did perhaps that Alister Campbell of ours, whose tablet will be on our Chapel wall next month; but courage in battle really means readiness to be killed for the good of someone else, it means unselfishness to the point of losing self. That is the root-fact about war. It is a call on men to be unselfish, to give up self for others. When war is a blessing to a nation, as most convincingly we think this war has been a blessing to our own, this is why: it forces men to be more unselfish, to give up self—money, children, ease, health, limb, life. The blessing of war is not war, but a certain energy which it sets to work, the energy of self-sacrifice.

And the blessing of peace, when peace does bless men, what is it? It is not peace, but that self-same energy,—Self-sacrifice.

For if to be at peace means only to dwell every man under his own vine and his own fig tree; if it means the comfort or luxury of the well-to-do, and neglect of one's neighbour's need, or the grinding of the poor, the taking care of oneself, and keep-

ing out of danger,—there is no blessing there for anyone, even the fortunate, and the people who live so will not be at peace among themselves for very long. Social maladies, disunion, war of classes, revolution and ruin are the fruits of a peace like this. But if to be at peace means that each citizen of the state tries to live his life for the help of the state, to make not himself only prosperous, but his neighbour too; if ruler and teacher, artist and man of knowledge, labourer and handicraftsman, navigator and pioneer, trader and capitalist, are trying each man to do his best, and make the most of himself, not for his own vainglory or enrichment only, but for the more glory and strength and safety of the whole people; if, briefly, the single life is giving itself up to the good of the great whole,—that is a blessed peace, and in this we may rejoice.

But here, too, the blessing of peace is not peace itself, but a certain energy which it sets free to work, the energy of Self-sacrifice. It is the same energy which made war a good instead of an evil; the same, only here it works not with pain and difficulty and restriction, but with freedom, and in a large room.

What is it then we have found? The energy of being unselfish, of giving up self, is the cause of good for men, whether in war, or in peace, which is war's opposite. Why, what is here but the truth which we call the Christian: what is this but the old doctrine of the Cross? The Cross, the giving up of self, this lies under all life, this is the strong power in the world, this is the power which maketh blessed.

But I know I ought not to leave you at a sermon's end face to face with a doctrine of theology. We must be practical, or who is the better for the doctrine?

Well then, you here have been for two years and a half

sharing in your nation's act of sacrifice by war. Perhaps you have not shared so very directly, but you have shared. You have seen schoolfellows, your fellows of a few months before, your fellows on the eve of their going, perhaps friends of yours, perhaps brothers, go out to the fighting ranks: you have shared the constriction of the heart in the bad days, the upleap in the good: you have given your own money to help soldiers' wives and children more generously than you do in peace-time: and no doubt you have dreamed dreams, and made resolutions silently, of public service when your own time comes. This has been your part in the nation's war. Now you are called to a more difficult part, to share its duties of peace. You are called to be unselfish, when unselfishness will have less glory and no excitement, and will certainly quite escape notice in despatches printed in a newspaper. Yet you must be unselfish unless you want peace to be a curse to Britain, whereas war has been a blessing. So what must you do? Live the Christian life, since it turns out that the Christian life is what makes war or peace a good: bear the Cross, since the cross, we find, is the force which moves the world. That is, you must be good workers in school, for that makes useful men to serve a country; good players of games out of school, since games, in spite of exaggerations for and against them, do make better citizens and better soldiers: good sons, loyal to parents, loving, sympathetic, unforgetful, because home is the part of your country to which *your* loyalty is due: good brothers to your school brotherhood, because, if some thinkers are right, a public school is a good school of public duty.

All this you must be, for by your being this, and not without it, will God give strength unto His people, will God give His people the blessing of peace.

XXII.

A School's Destiny.

(First Sermon at Glenalmond, May 6th, 1888.)

PSALM LXXXIX. 34.

"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. I have sworn once by My holiness that I will not fail David."

THE poet of this Psalm would seem to be one of the band of singers who had gathered round the throne of David and of Solomon, a leader of the choirs of Levites. But he is writing in "later, sadder age": he has seen the making and the breaking of Israel. The splendour of the days of Solomon has been dimmed in the reign of his heir: the King of Egypt had overrun the little land, broken down its fortresses, carried off its royal treasures, and left the Lord's anointed a vassal and tributary. Yet even so there is light after the storm, for "yet in Judah there were good things," says the chronicler of this day of humiliation. And the poet who had seen with his younger eyes the glories of the house of David, takes up his harp and strikes a clearer and more buoyant note of hopefulness, as there comes upon him the thrill of golden memories and of ancient faith which time and change and chance cannot kill. All round there is trouble, humiliation, disappointment, fear. Yes, but also there is a word of God, gone forth once and

never to be recalled, that God will protect His Israel: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips."

There is nothing which so stamps the special character of the Jewish race as this persistency of faith in their destiny. One might say the race had lived to teach mankind this lesson. As the Greek race had lived to teach the world how full of beauty is the earth and the mind of man; as the Roman to teach it the majesty of law and the efficacy of order; so the Jewish people had for its national mission to show how mightily a belief in things unseen can act upon the course of things that are seen, how a spiritual hope can overmaster the force of outward circumstances, and in hours of political and material weakness make a commonwealth strong. "God hath said: therefore it will come to pass." God hath said the seed of David shall endure for ever, therefore Shishak, King of Egypt, with his 1,200 chariots and his threescore thousand horsemen cannot put an end to it.

The great forces of the world do not change with time. The power of faith upon human life does not change; it can still, as ever, make a commonwealth, a society, an individual life strong even in weakness; it can master outward circumstances and overbear difficulties and falsify despondings calculations. Only we so seldom employ this power. We keep it like some antique weapon stored up in our armoury unused, we hardly count it among our resources, or, in our anxious calculations of means, methods, chances of an enterprise, reckon it among our means of victory, and bring it into the field.

But there are hours when we are thrown back upon realities, when the unseen world, which has been so dim and far-off a background, draws nearer to us, encroaches again on

the frontiers of common visible life, and takes form and shape and substance, and we feel the pressure on us of its forces, as of a hand laid on us in the dark. Every serious crisis in the life of a man or of a society brings such an hour to thoughtful hearts. Has not such an hour come to our society in this time of change and newness and beginnings afresh? The practised hand which has guided long, and so faithfully and so well, the course of this school has resigned the charge, acting in this as in all things with a rare and pure unselfishness; has gone away, carrying with him the love and reverence of those for whom he laboured and cared so unselfishly and well, and it has fallen to a stranger, strange to this place in knowledge but not in sympathy, to set his hand to the vacant helm, and with what skill and care he may steer the fortunes of the school on its future voyage. Such an hour must be to us an hour of anxiety. We are entering on the untried. We are putting our fortunes to the touch. Be it so. But the hour of anxiety is also the hour of faith, the hour of strength from the unseen world, the hour for resting the soul upon the promises of God. What happiness for us if at this moment we can summon to our aid some promise of God; if we can say, as they did in Judæa once, "His covenant will He not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of His lips: He has sworn by His holiness that He will not fail us."

Has God so sworn to us? Has He made with us a covenant He will not break?

There has come to us certainly no prophet message, no word of tradition first heard from the lips of God. But God has other ways of speaking, of making men sure that He has promised their good. The history of the past, the hand of Providence which it reveals, seems to me an authentic

message of God. And who can remember how, in the birth-day of this place, the men who made it gave of their wealth to make it, because they desired that there should be a home of learning in which the knowledge of this world should not be separated from the knowledge which is in Christ; and not gave only, but gave with a lavish hand, because they thought a noble life could be lived more easily in a noble and beautiful home—who can remember how a line of learned and devoted teachers have given of their best years and best ability to train up good servants of Christ and of country—who can think of the watchful Providence which in difficulties many, and dark days not a few, has kept safe this school, or of the honoured traditions which time has gathered round her name—who can think of these things and not believe, as I believe this day, that God will yet keep us safe and bless us. "His covenant will He not break." "The thing which has gone out of His lips," in very reality, though no one heard the words, "He will not alter." He will stablish the thing which He hath wrought in us. He will care for and protect and prosper this place, while there are men who will care for it under His name. While there are men—and boys. You would not have me forget *your* part, your great part in its good or evil, its prosperity or adversity, its honour or its dishonour. Your great part. For the tree is known by its fruit, and the school is known by its scholars. Yours it is to determine whether or no this goodly foundation shall be a fair tree planted by the waterside, that will bring forth his fruit in due season, whether the name of Glenalmond shall be a symbol for strong and healthful manhood, for pure lives and loyal affections, and for those firm and simple virtues which are the glory of the nation whose latest sons you are. Your great part, if you have among you the great-

ness to bear it. Whoever among you believes in his school, in its worth and in its future (and which of you does not claim this?), now is the hour of trial when your belief should have its perfect work in strenuous love of good, in courageous hate of evil. The hour of new beginnings, the hour of anxiety, is also the hour of faith. Seal your faith fast, then, in resolve and act, while the hour of faith is with you.

XXIII.

After Seven Years.

(May 5th, 1895.)

NUMBERS XXIV. 6.

"As trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters."

HEN I set out to find a matter on which to speak to you this Sunday, I had fixed upon the story of that singular enigmatic personage with whom the day's lessons are occupied, Balaam, the inspired prophet, who knew Jehovah, yet was not of God's people. I had fixed on this, but I had not chosen my text, when another thought came to me, and fastened itself on, by an association which I will explain, to the words which I have read out from one of to-day's lessons. The "trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, the cedar trees beside the waters," brought with them, to my mind, a word out of the Psalms, which I had quoted here under circumstances not easily to be forgotten by me. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the waterside, which will bring forth his fruit in due season: his leaf also shall not wither, and look, whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper." To remember that verse, and how I had once quoted it, was to remember that this particular day, this first Sunday of the summer term, would have for myself, and perhaps for more than

myself, something of a commemorative nature. It is to-day, this first Sunday of Trinity term, just seven years since I first spoke to the school from this pulpit. The number seven has always seemed to men to have in it something of completeness, to mark a period, a cycle of things or times. Of course, there is nothing in a number, and seven years are no more a period than six years are or eight: but man's fancy will have it so, and that fancy has stamped itself on human history. That it is seven years to-day since something one cares about began, is a thought that makes the mind stop and ponder. I cannot call back to myself this day seven years without a deep emotion on behalf, not of myself only, but of things for which I am most bound to care.

For that day was a day of anxiety, anxiety as to this school's future. We who were then here looked back at near distance on days when there was something more than anxiety. A man newly called to make himself answerable for the good of this school would have lacked the commonest perceptions, the most inevitable human feelings, if he had been without care or even misgiving. But deeper and stronger than such misgiving was the thought (and it is for the sake of this thought that I have referred to what might otherwise be a mere personal experience, now out of date and not worthy of reference in this church), a thought which is not personal, which can never be out of date, so long as there are any here to speak and be spoken to,—that there lay in the school itself an assurance of its future good. That assurance I would rather name in the words of another not my own. One who had himself ruled in this place, longer and with more prosperity than others, an old man, for whom as it proved my first days at Glenalmond were to be the last of his own lifetime; this man wrote to me at that time, and said, "When

I remember the sacrifices which good men have made for Glenalmond in the past, I cannot believe their work is going to fail." No, and *I* could not believe it. I did not believe it. I could not find it in me to fear that what had been so generously begun, what had been founded in such faith, sustained by such courage and persistence, was to fail and cease to be. I might know, I suppose I did know, that God gives no warrant that men's undertakings shall succeed because they were nobly planned: I might know that God can do without any men of His and any of their works: and yet—and yet—for all that, I was somehow well assured of how the future would be by knowing what the past had been. And so when first I spoke to your predecessors here, I made this, as one might call it, the motto, the watchword for the undertaking on which they and I were entering: we had in our past a declaration of God's goodwill towards this work which brought us together, and we might know that God would not desert and let fail a work which had begun for Him and under His guidance. That watchword is not out of date. But to that I added (and simple and obvious as it was, still it was right to say it, and it too is not out of date) that, in securing God's blessing on our school, great would be the part of those who were boys here: their lives at school, their worthiness, would most and first determine whether this seed of God's sowing should grow or cease to grow, whether this honourable foundation, this fair tree planted by the waterside, should bring her fruit in due season, and her leaf not wither, and what we did should prosper.

Well, seven years have gone, and those seven years are a record of a blessing of God upon this work in His name, a blessing not tardy, a blessing full and constant. "A joyful and a pleasant thing it is to be thankful." Be we

thankful to-day that God has answered so the prayer in which we prayed that He would "bless our school and enlarge it with a wider usefulness."

Thankful. Yes, and with something more than thankfulness. Or, shall I rather say, with that kind of thankfulness which holds fast in the future the blessing it acknowledges in the past? Great is your part here, who are boys, in holding fast that blessing. On your lives and the worth of them, on their truth, courage, purity, integrity, on their steadfast manliness and loyal affections, hangs most the fortune of a school whose good fortune you each desire. You who are here now are not going to say to me, because you were not here then, that my memory of a faith now seven years old is nought to you. You are not going to grudge to follow me in this act of truest gratitude, of fittest commemoration —I mean, the resolution to make sure God's faithfulness to us by our faithfulness to Him, so that not for another seven years, but, if it so be in His counsels, for seventy times seven, this tree which the Lord hath planted may put forth a leaf which does not wither, and bring forth her fruit in due season.

XXIV.

After Twice Seven Years.

(On the Dedication of an Altar, July 21st, 1901.)

Psalm cxxvi. 6.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

IN choosing what I should say to you this morning I had to think of a double occasion which falls next Sunday, the day on which we hope to dedicate our new altar, when the Bishop will speak to you at our midday service, and the day which is the last Sunday at school for that group of you who leave this summer. To-day will be my last occasion of addressing these from this pulpit, and so I have taken a Psalm for my text in which I find a thought fitted for that dedication service, and a thought fitted to serve as good-speed and God-speed to those who are parting.

What does the Psalm say? He who wrote it is a Jew who has come back to Palestine with that colony of faithful men, who after the edict of Cyrus re-occupied the old home and rebuilt its walls and roofs and temple. Something has brought to his mind that day of wonder, the return of Israel from exile. A day of wonder indeed. An impossible bliss had fallen on them, too blessed, too marvellous for heart

to credit: their astonished eyes swam as in a blessed dream: laughter ran from their joy-shaken hearts, song from their raptured lips: like voices in a dream came to them the speech of heathen neighbours watching them in their glad delirium: "The Lord of this captive folk has done great things for them." "Yea, indeed," cries the Psalmist, looking back from his quiet hour of sober certainty upon that far-back hour of miracle, "indeed the Lord has done great things for us: glad are we." But there the strain changes softly from a wild joy to a wistful. "Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the rivers in the south. Turn again our captivity. Bring back the many, many of Israel who still abide in the far heathen lands; bring them back to swell the ranks of these few, all too few of Israel, scattered sparingly in the vacant land, half-lost among the vales and hill-tops, where once they dwelt a mighty people. Bring back, bring back our sons and daughters; let the stream of life flow again with broad current in its ancient stream-bed: fill up again our wasted, empty land, O Lord, and all-fulfil the promise Thou hast fulfilled but half." Then pensively he closes, "So it will be: it will be so. There is fulfilment for men's hopes, spite of doubt and sorrow. He that to-day goes casting seed with tears of disappointment at the barrenness of an unkindly soil, will doubtless come again some day in joy and with the sheaves of his harvest in his bosom." So spoke this old singer of Israel concerning the hopes of men and the fulfilment of hopes: so he spoke his thanksgiving for the years past, his faith for the years to be.

And the Psalm is a good Psalm for us to-day, for we too are thinking of thanksgiving and of fulfilment. For we are raising now an altar to be a thank-offering to Almighty God for the many years—and I for my part can all but reckon

twice seven—in which we believe He has blessed the work of this school, has protected, cheered, guided us. There is thanksgiving for a thought. But next we are sending out some score of you into the world; and if that is not a moment for thinking of human hopes and their fulfilment, I know not when the moment will come at all.

Thanksgiving, then, our thanksgiving—is this Psalm a right voice for that? Ah! well, there have been days here, days quite out of the range of the knowledge and feeling of all but a very few who are in this school now, when indeed it did seem that the Lord had done great things for us, days of restoration after long straitness and doubt and faint hope, days of the turning again of the stream of many lives into dwelling-places thinly peopled. Many a time did it seem to some of us, as the month brought round this Psalm, that here was even our Psalm of Psalms, our truest, fullest voice of thanksgiving. "The Lord hath done great things for them," whispered neighbour and friend. "Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice," our hearts made happy answer.

And do you think those other words, the wistful words, the "Turn our captivity, O Lord," were not also for us here? Do you think that those who have been workers in this little plot of God's vineyard which He has given them here, the workers,—men, women, boys,—who have believed it was God's work they were trying to do, however poorly, do you think they have not felt that same wistfulness, that longing which every week our prayer gives voice to, that God would "enlarge with a wider usefulness" this school of His, that craving which the old Psalmist voices for a fuller fulfilment, a stronger strength, a life more alive, a love more purely love, among us who make this little kingdom of the Christ? Ah

me! the heart of man, the experience of man, is in one age as in another, in Scotland as in Palestine, and always it has to cry that though God hath done great things for us already, yet there are greater things which as yet He has not done: there is a fulfilment which not yet has been fulfilled: there is a captivity still to be turned, as the rivers in the south; there is still a breadth of waste where not yet a harvest shines; there is a longing of the heart for a good not yet seen, a longing which not yet is filled.

Yes, and is there not also a faith that yet and yet there *will* be a fulfilment? They that sow in tears—in tears, vexed, disappointed, saddened, doubtful, wearying—shall reap in joy, shall doubtless come again with joy and bring their sheaves home. God will not forget, forsake His heritage: He will bring all to pass: there will be fulfilment.

In that gratitude, in this faith, let us lay the stones of this altar of our thanks.

And then about you who are going away. Can you also find yourselves in this Psalm? Why yes, how easily! For if you have Thanksgiving in your thoughts, thanks on your own account for the years of schooling now completed, and some good, let us hope, reaped in them, yet I believe the other thought, Fulfilment, will be still stronger in your minds. You are thinking of how, when you leave school and have your freedom and your work, you will be able to fulfil yourself: how you will prove the kind of stuff you are made of, and do something for the credit of yourself, or your family, or your old school, or perhaps your country. Much I hope it is so, that you are full of this thought—fulfilment. That hope and ambition is the right flower for youth to wear in this season of your life. Well, then, you are going away into the world, and there you mean to fulfil yourselves.

Heaven guide and prosper you thereto! Now what will really happen to you? Will it be as it is in this Psalm, a coming again with joy and your sheaves brought with you? True it is not quite with you as in the Psalm. You are not going on your way weeping, but with brightness, hopefulness, confidence, delight. Still, at any rate, you are bearing forth good seed, are you not? You have powers of the mind, forces of the spirit, which are to do something in the world. Then doubtless, doubtless, you will come again with joy and bring your sheaves with you. Ah! that "doubtless" of the Psalm. Is it so "doubtless"? You see, you who leave school this month have had a great many predecessors in this enterprise of a life,—all the generations of all human time. Now if you were to ask their experience, our experience, your elders, we should have to tell you that human life is, as far as we know it, very like what this Psalmist of restored Israel found it. The Lord does great things for us: yes, but how much that we hoped for has not yet been done: how are we left to pray still, "Turn our captivity, as the rivers in the south": the fulfilments that we know in ourselves, that we see in our friends who started on life's enterprise at our side, what half-fulfilments they seem to be: the sheaves in our bosom, how scanty they are: the joy with which we bring them home, how sober a joy it is, and wistful, and almost sad. Now may that not turn out to be your case too, you confident young ones who are going to begin; and may not yours also be only a half-fulfilment? Yes, that may very likely be your case too, since it seems to have been the case of everybody else before you.

Is that an ill word for me to give you at your start, this discouraging word that all your elders have been disappointed and so will you? It would be an ill word, if it *were* my word.

But it is not. No. Always in my own ears has rung a saying of one of our wisest, who, speaking of some such things as are now in our minds, said to me, "We know not what fulfilment is." Aye, we do not know. And therefore perhaps our lives are fulfilled, when most we think they have missed fulfilment. God does know what fulfilment is. He knows what our powers were meant for, what the use is upon earth of each of us, something probably very different from what our self-conceit, or else our self-distrust pictured as the proper use of our particular life. Well, to that use we may have been put, although our own dreams of usefulness are left so unfulfilled. We come again from life's harvesting with a very sober, unexultant joy: but perhaps we are wrong in this want of joy: perhaps the sheaves are there, only in God's bosom, not ours.

Well, there is a thought for you: not mine: a wise man's thought, a man very old now, and old already when he said it. But my own thought—if you will have one from me to carry with you, and to test after many days—would be this. I have fancied that this temptation to think our lives are not fulfilled may be a kind of crowning trial of our faith. We think we have failed, have done nothing, have wrought no deliverance on the earth: but God is looking on the while to see whether we have the heart and the eyes to discern a fulfilment, which is not indeed what we expected and desired and could most enjoy, but yet is His fulfilment, the true one and the best. Yes, no doubt He is trying us, to prove of what stuff our love and faith are made. Weariness, vexations, defeats, and the discovery of so much vanity in things human, ourselves included, tempt us to say we have missed fulfilment, and to be sour and sad at coming home empty-handed from the harvest field of life. But then faith in us rises up, lays

a hand upon the sad doubts, and flings them away: love of God rises in us and discovers to our eyes that life has not failed merely because it has not turned out just as we hoped and liked: no, our life comes again from the field to God, but it does not return to Him void, it has accomplished that which *He* pleased, not we, it has prospered in the thing whereto *He* sent it; we have sown, and we have reaped, and the sheaves are gathered, not in our bosom, but in God's.

XXV.

The Sentiment of School.

(1892.)

"Hic amor, hic patria."

IT is not necessary, though it is usual, that a sermon should begin with a text. To-day I should like to begin without one: or, to be more correct, I should like to start from a text which you will not find in the Bible, but which you may now read on the walls of this Chapel.

The father of two Glenalmond boys, who have died in their youth, has placed here a monument to record their names. Their names. For the monument records little else except their names and their connection with this school. There is indeed, by the fault of fate, not their fault, little else which could be recorded: for one of them died ere boyhood was over, and the other when his manhood was but a year or two old. Little else to record: but one thing else there was, and it was for this that the father asked that a memorial here should be accorded them. That one thing else was the thing which it is sought to indicate by the four Latin words at the foot of the tablet. "Hic amor, hic patria." That is the voice which your dead brethren leave after them as their message to you. "Here we gave our love, here we owned a home."

The words came from the page of the greatest and tenderest of Roman poets. Those are the words that can be said about them, and because they could be so truly said, a father has wished to record them before our eyes.

And I have thought that I might fitly make that inscription my text to-day. For the feeling to which it testifies—the feeling of affectionate and loyal regard towards the school which has reared us—is one that is very widely spread, and which plays a real part, even if a modest one, in the affairs of school, and even of something wider than school. It is a sentiment which, I think, has not always existed, at least in any strength: indeed I believe it to be a quite modern growth. It may therefore have but shallow roots, and not be destined to reign permanently. But still it exists in our age unmistakably: it affects a very large number of people, and some of them powerfully. It is a standing fact of the day, and therefore, since religion must take account of every human feeling and human fact, we may very rightly take some thought about it in the Church of a school which is pledged to religion as well as to study, and a school too which, by testimony of strangers, has witnessed not less of this feeling than any other.

So I ask, What is the value of the love of a school in such ways as religion reckons value? What use has it in the training of character?

To begin with, do not let us exaggerate. The influence of the sentiment may be much less than might be expected from the profession of it. Everyone claims to have it: but there is a great deal of imitation among men, and still more among boys, and there may be some with whom a love of their school is only a fashion. With others it may be no more than a liking, such as an animal will have for a familiar

locality: and with a good many I should fear it was hardly to be distinguished from the spirit of rivalry and self-assertion which makes people take sides with something only for the sake of taking sides, and of disparaging something else. On the other hand, I am sure that with many (and that "many" cannot increase too fast) it is life's early discipline of an emotion which in later stages produces the noblest and the most fruitful characters—the emotion of reverence for some corporate life of which we are a part. Patriotism and public duty, with all their hardihoods and self-sacrifices, are founded on that emotion. What the State or the Church will claim from us some other day, our school asks of us to-day. It reminds us that we are not our own, but parts of a life wider than our own and more enduring. For indeed how many of her scholars, besides those whose names are graven on her walls, has Glenalmond survived, though her years are as yet not two generations old!

That is one use of the love of school: it is the nurse of public virtue.

There is another use which perhaps you will think less solid. But it seems to me to be a matter of plain observation, that in the hard, over-occupied, humdrum life of toil which is the portion of so many after the genial years of boyhood are over, the affectionate memory of and care for the old school has been a thing of some power to preserve the freshness and generosity of the mind. It has acted, somewhat as the memory of home will act, to remind the perhaps worn or coarsened man of his simpler, tenderer, more spontaneous and unselfish feelings, and, by recalling them, to reproduce them in him. If it can do that, as I think is certain, it can do much.

In the belief that it can do this, I commend to you this

warning. You will be some day far from here, and the image of stately walls looking down on a mountain river will haunt you in some pause of work, or, it may be, at some stern crisis of your fortunes. You do not wish that with that image there should also rise the thought, "It was a fair place, but I lived falsely in it: it was a lovely scene, but it has seen unlovely deeds of mine." You wish rather that the thought should be, "It is a noble school, and something of mine too has gone to the making of it. At least it has witnessed resolves and purposes of mine, secret but honourable, and I shall not be false to them: it has seen some poor actions of mine which I need not be ashamed of, when I turned aside a younger brother from a folly, or made space for a down-trodden one to rise and take heart. I will not act now less nobly than I acted then."

For the sake of such thoughts in the future, I say to you, "Take care of your deeds now, for they will be your memories hereafter."

Will any one say, "These are fine and flimsy considerations"; will he say, as one of old, "With little persuasion thou wouldst persuade me to be good"? Why then, with another of old, we must answer, "Would to God that whether with little or with much we could persuade you to keep whole and undefiled this treasure of a noble memory which one day you will prize so dear."

XXVI.

Gathering up the Fragments.

St. John vi. 12.

"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

WHAT a contrast is here! Jesus has extricated Himself and His twelve followers from a situation which had seemed to them very formidable by an astounding act of power. Five thousand seekers of the Messiah, who all day long had been round Him as listeners, were at the point of being turned into as many shamed and indignant disbelievers—for this was what the Twelve foresaw as the consequence, if the multitudes were dismissed famishing to their night-march home—when this prophet of Nazareth lays a finger upon the door of Heaven's storehouse, and the thousands are divinely fed. The air is throbbing with the wonder of that act, the ears of men are singing with ancient words of prophecy come on a sudden true, their eyes swim with visions of a Messiah-Kingdom sprung, as they deem, this moment into being, hearts swell to the bursting with wild hopes, glances of guerilla-leaders among the peasant throng are exchanging eager signals, there are mutterings, whisperings, conferrings, fingerings of hidden weapons, all the signs of passion in a crowd before it breaks into the roar for action: the wind of fate is a-blow, the wave is rising, the storm will burst, when——the wonder-worker

Himself, the sole cause of this passion, turns quietly to the excited men at His side, and utters—what? An appeal to their belief in Him, a declaration of the Messiah, a pronunciamento against the national enemy? No, an order to set about the very homeliest of homely tasks, such a task as a peasant housewife might set her children. "Come," He says, "there is food still left uneaten. Gather the fragments up: do not let us waste anything."

One thought which is brought us by this contrast between the astonishing wonder-work and the homely economy is that the very same contrast will be found in everyone's religious life. In all religious life can be seen these two things—Heaven's abundance, earth's economies, standing over against one another just as on the Galilean hill-side. For the religious life is made up of two parts, of which the one is faith and the other is duty; one is our vision of God, the other our work for God; one is the glow of a divine affection kindled in us by the Father's love, the other is the doing of cold tasks; cold, humdrum, unromantic, unengaging tasks; matters of rising up and lying down, going out and coming in, keeping times and rules and observances, paying little attentions and kindnesses, using little restraints upon eyes and ears and tongue and thought, going without some pleasant things because they are wrong, and doing a score of commonplace, insignificant things for no other reason than because they are right. Such is life, the good life, the Christian life; a contrast of the high and the low, infinite beliefs and microscopical duties, warmth of spirit and the dulness of fact, an impulse come to us out of Heaven, and plain tasks upon this plain earth, a glimpse of the wealth in the opened store-house of God—a glimpse, and then the stooping along the ground to pick up crumbs, to gather the

fragments that remain, and lose nothing that we can help.

Now this stooping along the ground to pick up the crumbs is what we Christians do not like. The dull, little, irksome insignificant tasks, the minute, inglorious particulars of conduct, these are the things we grudge to do. Most of us have some day or another the moment of uplifting, the moment of vision when we see the beauty of holiness, the moment when the heart beats strongly with the love of God, and when we feel upon us the blessing of the Father. That is the moment of the good resolution. Then has to come the day's work—the drab, lustreless, dusty particulars of conduct, the little efforts to keep appointments, observe times, obey rules, to be patient in learning a lesson or teaching one, to wake up one's mind for a worship or a prayer in private, to check one's temper or to check one's desires. Now all these little matters, though very small, are holy if rightly done: they are only the crumbs and morsels of the bread of Heaven, which Christ has broken for us, but they *are* bread of Heaven. The difficulty is (we all know it) to remember that they are. The difficulty is for us, when the moment of uplifting is gone by, to hear a voice of Christ saying, "Gather up the fragments that remain."

There is one thought. A still more obvious one remains. Why did the makers of the Prayer Book choose this chapter of St. John for the Gospel of the last Sunday in Trinity, the end of the year of Church seasons? Surely because "Gather up the fragments" was the very word for an ending year. "Gather up the fragments that remain"—why, what else is there left us to do in this last remaining tithe of the new century's first year? Am I not perhaps speaking to some who, unless they gather up these fragments of a term's work and opportunities of conduct, will have gathered very

little, who have on the whole lost the harvest, and must save the gleanings if they are to save anything? Will they waste also the few weeks left them of 1901? I do not know; but I do know how they will be tempted to do so. If their conscience pricks them for the waste, it perhaps will be quieted by a reasonable, persuasive, false voice in them saying, "No use to mend so late. The time is all but all gone: better let all go. No good doing things by halves, much less by quarters. A little spurt of energy at the fag-end of a year, who will notice it or value it? Better start fair next term, next year. That's a natural time to begin new ways. Has the school career been rather a failure? That can't be altered in three weeks. Better start fair in a new place,—university, regiment, house of business, or plantation over sea."

A reasonable-sounding, persuasive voice that. Why should you not listen to it?

Well, first because new beginnings do not depend on the calendar. They depend on the will of a Spirit Whose breath bloweth where it listeth and when it listeth. If that breath has touched you now, if your conscience pricks you now for having been no good son of the Heavenly Father, but a careless, idle, selfish one, then in the name of that Holy Spirit begin to be different now, this moment, while the breath of the Spirit does touch you, while you have the heart and the will to be different. Now: not when Christmas comes, not when the New Year, but now.

For do you suppose it will help you, when the date you have fixed on for a new beginning comes by the calendar, if your memory of the past is to be a memory of failure all the way up to the end. No, indeed. But it will help you very much, when the New Year begins for you, here or

anywhere else, if you shall be able to look back and say that, before the evening quite came down upon an ill-spent day, at least one late and hasty stroke of work was done to prove to yourself that you were able not to waste to-morrow; that at the close of the day's battle, in which you had been something of a laggard or a coward, you yet turned and struck one good blow, to show the great Captain there is manhood in your arm after all, and to-morrow will not be like to-day. Yes, if most of God's bounty has been lost so far, all but all of it, still let us gather up the poor fragments, and there will be lost not everything.

And there is another reason why you must not listen to the voice which says it is no use trying so late. No use, it says, to do things by halves, much less by quarters, or lesser fractions. All or none, it says: fragments which do not make a whole are nothing. Are they so? Then what work of man is worth the doing, what life is worth the living? For all lives and works of men, those which seem the most successful and complete, the most rounded wholes, all are fragments; they are but broken gleams of God's truth which the man has mirrored, wrecks and shreds of a divine purpose which he has fulfilled. God must take these broken lives and works, and otherwhere, otherhow, must make them wholes.

> "I have lived my life, and that which I have done
> May He within Himself make pure,"

is the cry of the dying hero-king, and the cry of all who do the best and most. Now if that thought is a humbling one for these, for others, those who do least, it is a cheering one. We have to do with a God Who will not despise a tithe of service because He has been denied the whole: One Who

will bless the labour begun even at an eleventh hour: Who will count and value even the fragments which those gather who have wasted all besides. Then do not you despise the tithe which you could pay Him still, nor waste the twelfth hour because eleven are gone, nor be too proud to stoop and gather up the fragments that remain that so there may be lost at least not everything.

XXVII.

The Blessing of Dependence.

(1899.)

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1 Kings x. 24.

"So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom."

1 Kings xi. 9, 10.

"And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice."

SOLOMON in all his glory is the subject of to-day's Scriptures. Solomon in his glory,—and Solomon with the shadow of decay falling on his glory's skirts: Solomon, to whom the Queen of Sheba came, and when she saw his splendour and listened to his wisdom, there was no more spirit in her—and Solomon against whom the Lord stirred up adversaries to shake his throne, and at last to shake it down, Hadad the Edomite, and Rezin of Damascus, and that child of destiny, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who lived to pluck down the greatness of David's house. Glory and overthrow, bloom and decay, an empire made and an empire doomed, these are the contrast which to-day's lessons frame in one picture. We are made to look at the keystone of an arch, which the fortune of Solomon describes, and to see the upward curve of greatness

sweeping into the downward curve of weakness and humiliation.

I do not know how you feel about this; but for my own part the spectacle of decay, though it is of an empire three thousand years or near ago, whose fate affects us not one jot in pocket or in pride, always affects me with sadness. "Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentes mortalia tangunt." Yes, "e'en here," in this country of ours, far from Solomon's golden East, and in this late age farther yet from his golden reign,

> "E'en here the tear of pity springs
> And hearts are touched by mortal things."

And that Solomon's kingdom began to fall even when most it flourished gives one some touch of heart-ache.

Doubtless, however, like all else in Israel, this too was written for our instruction upon whom the ends of the earth are come. What then is that instruction?

Some would answer, None but the very old and not very helpful lesson that all things are mortal, empires among them. That is nature's way. The seed quickens and roots and springs and fills, and puts forth the bud and blows and fruits, and then it falls and moulders in earth again. So with empires: they are but grander, costlier flowers, of which the tissues are the lives and fates of men. But all flesh is grass and as the flower of the field: the law of growth is the law also of decay, the curve of an ascending life is but the beginning of the curve of a descending life: it is as idle to deplore the falls of empires as it would be to deplore the red leaf of October, or the fallen and trampled leaf of late November. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Macedon, Rome, Spain all rose and fell; they were but the flowerings age by age of

the human spirit and force: like flowers, they dropped into dust again: all's said that need be said: and this briefer, narrower empire of King Solomon is no more to be sorrowed for than they.

If this were the whole truth of it there would be no more to say, and the instructiveness of the tale would not be very great. But then man is not wholly as a flower and the grass of the field. He has a moral nature, and this takes him out of the class of only natural objects, and requires a different account of *his* growths and *his* decays. And accordingly in the case of empires we can for the most part trace a moral cause, and not only a natural one, of their decays. They die by faults and not by misfortunes only. This is the view taken by the Scripture of the decadence of Solomon. His glory did not perish only as that of the lilies to which Christ once compared it. It perished because the Lord was angry with Solomon; and of that anger one reason is stated by the Scripture, his idolatry, "his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel"; and another can be supplied by ourselves from the narrative, namely, his selfish oppression of his subjects. A heart turned from God, a heart grown selfish—there is the cause of Solomon's decay, and there is lesson enough for us. Let us try to draw it out.

I had thought to make the lesson one for the individual; to say to you that there is nothing absurd in drawing morals from the fate of empires for the life of a man, since empires only exist for the sake of the single human lives, empires were made for man, not man for empires, and the soul is the only final fact in this world, and in Heaven there will be no empires, not even the British. Accordingly I meant to try to show you how the same laws by which Solomon's kingdom rose and fell are the laws by which the kingdom

of a man's soul rises or falls. And it could be shown. But this thought has been pushed aside by another, which more belongs to the season. The present time of the year is a good moment for thinking not of an individual but a social lesson, because it is a moment when the love and pride of our society are always quickened by the circumstances of the season: there is the end of the school year, there is the commemorative festival of the foundation, there is the parting with a large group out of our brotherhood. It is the year's patriotic moment for us. What then is the instruction in this Scripture for our community, what can Glenalmond learn from Solomon?

I am going to draw no very grand or even wide-reaching moral, but only one that I think of now, because it has come home to my own mind very often in the years that I have passed here. This it is. There have been many times in the half century of our school in which it would have been natural to sigh for a larger measure of prosperity and strength: there have indeed not been any times, as far as I can judge by experience or from records, in which the sigh for a more strong and assured well-being, more visible success, more public honour, more generous and hearty help, or at least sympathy, would not have been natural and justifiable. But to me it seems, in the moments which I count the wisest, that perhaps things are best as they are. For I have seen how schools elsewhere have been hurt by much flourishing and too assured success and a too ungrudged honour from without: how these things, which seem enviable, have really been the cause of pride, blindness to faults, carelessness as to right and justice, and a hard unlovely spirit. And on the other hand it has not been difficult to see that a certain spirit and temper which the best hearts that have belonged to us

have shown, the spirit of an affectionate and tender patriotism instead of an arrogant and selfish one, of warm and true brotherliness, of a steadfast sympathy, ready to mourn at a common sorrow and not only to rejoice in a common triumph, and, I will add, of an unworldly faith in the school as one of those good things which would not be allowed to fail,—that this spirit has been the fruit not chiefly of successes shared together, but of doubts and perils, struggles and reproofs and slights and misprisings, which in being steadfastly borne have more endeared the school to its best sons than any sunshine of prosperity could endear a school. And for myself, speaking as one who was not himself reared here, but was reared in a place where a history not so wholly different could inspire a not wholly different feeling, and who has now seen one-fifth of our school's history, it has come upon me not once or twice that there is a better thing than an easy and sure prosperity. It is the sense of dependence, a happy dependence, on the guidance and care and protection of God, the being left to walk by faith and not by sight, to support ourselves by daily bread, the bread day by day, the sense of a kind, secret help which does not sweep difficulties out of the path, but, as surely as they arise, aids us to surmount them, which does not fill us with an abounding force, but makes our strength be as our day, so that we cannot ever boast ourselves and yet we never fail. There was a wise, true-hearted man of old, whose words are monthly read: "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be removed: Thou, Lord, of Thy goodness, hast made my hill so strong. Thou didst turn Thy face from me: and I was troubled. Then cried I unto Thee, O Lord: and gat me to my Lord right humbly." He was happy in learning that lesson by the turning from him of God's face. But are they less happy

who, like ourselves here, are taught the same lesson of the humble, trustful heart not by violence, the sudden shaking down of a false security, but by the slow and gentle dealings of a Providence which has never greatly lifted up, and never has let wholly fall? "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee." Peace of heart in trustful leaning upon God,—that is for us the lesson of Solomon's golden reign, of the kingdom that was glorious, and fell.

XXVIII.

Our Divine "Founder."

(1898.)

PSALM LXXXVII. 1.

"His foundation is on the holy hills."

HIS is a Psalm with a singular individuality. It is very beautiful, and it is curiously incomplete, so that it at once charms a student's mind and tantalises it. No reader who has only our English version before him can possibly get at the Psalmist's meaning in three out of the seven verses, the second of the two strophes which compose it; and yet no reader who wants to understand it can fail to perceive that he has before him a true heart-burst of song, though it is too much like the heart-burst of some rapt speaker with tongues, one who in the spirit speaketh mysteries. There is reason enough then why I should try to paraphrase it by the help of those Hebrew scholars who have deciphered the meaning.

The Psalmist begins by declaring the glory of the city of Zion. It is that her founder is no man but God. His foundation (for so the words truly are) it is which rests on the hills, made sacred by God's presence there. Other holy places there were in Israel; there was Shiloh of old days of the Judges, there was Bethel hallowed since the night of Jacob's vision, but to these and all others God had pre-

ferred Jerusalem, "The Lord loveth . . . Jacob." Yet of Zion, the already great, greater should the future be: "Very excellent things were spoken of her," and the excellent things are these. The days were coming when the worst enemies of Israel should be so changed in heart that they too should be enrolled as citizens in that Zion whom they had hated and warred with. Jehovah would name Rahab, that is the proud power of Egypt, and Babylon, the new, dim, terrible power to the East, as among those who knew Him. Philistia the spiteful neighbour, Tyre the prosperous worldling, Ethiopia the brood of that accursed one among the sons of Noah, these too should be made children of Zion. This man and this, saith the Lord, was born there, shall be treated as if he were of the true sons of Israel: "This and this, one and all, are thine, O Zion," cries the Lord God; "all are thy children." And strengthened with such incomings from the four corners of the earth, the Church of God upon the hill of Zion should be stablished and endure. Lastly is pictured a festal procession of Zion's citizens, and the chorus of their song is the praise of Zion as the source of all life and joy to her children, "All my fountains are in thee."

Thus we interpret, by connecting and completing them, the bursts and jets of emotion which make this beautiful and perplexing Psalm. One thing at any rate is clear. The writer loved his country and was very proud of it. This little hymn is the very music of patriotism.

We are all of us patriotic. Our sympathies are at once with the writer. Just now especially, because that special form of patriotism which we call love of one's school is necessarily much alive on the eve of the departure from school into the world, which has arrived for many of you. At that time the patriotism which is merely proud is reinforced by the patriot-

ism which is also tender. It is just the time for us to consider this virtue of public spirit, of affection for one's school in the light of this ancient voice of the love of country, this music of patriotism. The man who made this Psalm knew something about public spirit. Let us hear him on that theme. Perhaps we can translate his thoughts about his Zion into thoughts about our Glenalmond.

See then how he begins. "His foundation is upon the holy hills." His. It is God's foundation, not a man's. All men are glad if they can name some great one as the founder of their society: our Psalmist can name One greater than the greatest, Jehovah, the Eternal. But if we claim, as we do, that this society of ours is a Church of Christ, that its true reason and character is this, then our claim, too, is that God is our founder. His foundation is here, too, and upon holy hills. Yes, but the consequences of having God for a founder! First, there is no place for human pride, for pride and self-congratulation on any merit, success, glory, for all is God's doing. Yet how much is public spirit at a school made up of pride, self-glorification, disparagement of rivals. Next, God's foundation must be for God's objects, not man's. A school exists for the sake of doing something which He cares about. Is that remembered by us all? Are we not curiously narrow in our conception of what a school is for and what makes its glory? But you cannot suppose the Divine Founder cares a great deal about how a school is talked of in the worldly world. You cannot think He cares about the number on a school's roll, or frequent and honourable mention in newspaper paragraphs, nor about scores on a field or a range, nor even about University honours or places in a Public Service list. If He does care at all for these things, it will only be because of some moral goodness

which they register, as industry, healthy ways of living, courage, constancy, subordination of self to others, even if only as members of a team. This goodness, however, even in its humblest forms and manifestations, He does care for. Do we? Is our jealousy for the school a jealousy for its soundness of character, for its nobleness and justness of spirit? Are we all working very hard to get and maintain these things, and do we believe that if thus we seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness, then all the other things, as far as need be, will be added unto us? Yet they would be; and to make your school good is the certain way to make it also great. Or if not, it were better not be great.

Again, Rahab and Babylon shall be named among those who know Him: Zion is to be open to the alien. But how exclusive and selfish has been the spirit too commonly of the schools. Less now than thirty years ago, I think, but selfish enough still. Well, we cannot translate the Hebrew's aspiration very literally here: a school does not hope or desire that all the world should be enrolled as its citizens. I will tell you what I think is the true parallel to this large and hospitable thought of the Psalmist. We of the Public Schools, we who have gained a culture of mind, body, and character, which, whether or no it be the best kind of education, at any rate is a unique one, must not think to keep it to ourselves, for our own pride or our own use. We must share it with the world. That is, to be concrete and plain, you, who go away from here, put your training to service to discipline, teach, cheer, guide, refine, animate your brothers of the less trained classes who cannot go to school as you. Do something, like those University men who go to the University settlements in the East End, to make poor men or poor lads richer in thought, spirit, capacity by the wealth you can bring them

from your own training. When the Lord writeth up the people of this England and Scotland, let Him say of this and this man among the ill-advantaged classes, that he too was born there, he too is become, by ministry of yours, a child of that spiritual city whose name is Christianity and knowledge and healthy life and comely manners.

Last, "All my fountains are in thee," sang the Israelite. Out of his Zion flowed to him the life and joy which ran in his veins. Again we cannot be quite literal. Great in a man's life may be his old school, but not all his fountains are in the old school. We must not exaggerate; there are other sources of influence and inspiration for us besides school. Not all my fountains (can one say to one's school), not all my fountains are in thee. Not all, but many. Most of you now leaving us will dip again and yet again into the sacred wells of this your memory of school, and draw waters for the soul's refreshment and strength and inspiration. Back you will come in the trial hour, or the hour when you are nerving yourself for a trial, to that hour when (pray God there may have been such an hour) in some little matter here you pulled your shrinking self together, and dared something, and came strongly through. Back you will come, in perplexing times, to the recollection of some right word of one or another of those who are now teaching you, spoken in class, or field, or chapel; some right word, which God took from us, and pointed and urged and aimed and lodged in your mind, and blessed it with prosperity. Back you will come in life's battles, ah! perhaps, God knows! in very literal battle, to a scene where you learned to "play up, play up, and play the game." Back, anyhow, you will come out of that drouthy, weary world which dims the eye with labour, and deafens the ear, and chokes the throat with dust, back

to drink some draught of old feeling, old romance, which, if it be not the bread of life, yet is the wine that maketh glad the heart of man. Back assuredly, as I will hope, out of that hard world, where faith sometimes faints, to drink again of that living water out of fountains divine, which is the veriest life of man and the gift of Christ alone, but which once here, whether by grace of Sacrament or of heart's-communion in the secret moments of knowledge and belief, a boy with a boy's heart, drew in through all his veins, and lo! it is a well in him of water springing up unto eternal life.

XXIX.

School in Dreamland.

(July 22nd, 1902.)

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1 Kings iii. 5, 15.

"In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon. And, behold, it was a dream."

WHAT is a dream?

Nowadays people say a dream is nothing at all. Vain as dreams, light as dreams, are common comparisons; and to say a man is a dreamer is to say that for practical purposes he is little worth. On the other hand, in Solomon's day, and for long after, dreams were held to be worth a great deal: they were God's communications with men, they were revelations, oracles of the future. May the true estimate of dreams lie between the two, the reverential and the contemptuous estimate? Dreams, perhaps, are not oracles, but also dreams are not nothings. They are something. They are the thoughts which hold sway in the mind at times when the will is in abeyance, and no longer is controlling, directing, marshalling, choosing, excluding, or shaping the thoughts which rise, as it controls and shapes them in waking hours. For this reason, because the will is not at work upon them, and so the flow of thoughts and feelings is spontaneous, it happens that dreams frequently represent those thoughts or emotions which have become habitual to us, and, as we say, instinctive. In this

way the nature of a man's dreams may reflect, even more correctly than his deliberate thoughts when he is awake and master of them, his character: his dreams may be the register of the moral level he has attained and fairly made his own: his dream may be (however unlikely it seems) the man's self.

So, I have always felt, it was with the boy king, Solomon. The dream that came to him in Gibeon was not something from without, forced upon his mind by a miracle. It was a dream, like one of ours. That he believed it to be God's message to him does not hinder its having been a dream. But it was a dream, I shall believe, which reflected his waking thoughts. It expressed the true mind of Solomon, or, shall we not say, his heart? Before he went to rest that night his soul had resolved the problem of the kingly life, and had perceived that the true king must be of a wise and understanding heart, not a proud and selfish slave-master. Before he gave away his powers to sleep, his soul had made her choice. He would be, if he might, the wise king rather than the splendid, not his people's master, but their shepherd. Then came the dream and declared the choice: "Give me a wise and understanding heart, that I may rule my people well." He woke, and knew the colloquy had been the voice of God speaking with his soul. How else? Do not we too at this day believe that, when our inner spirit counsels us aright, the Counsellor is the Spirit of the high God? Yes, it *was* the Lord that appeared unto Solomon at Gibeon in a dream.

But if all this is so, then Solomon's dream is fetched out of the region of marvel and the exceptional, and brought into the region in which move our own spiritual affairs at this day. I mean, Solomon's dream was just what we often call "a boy's dream." It was a boy's ambition stirring in a boy's heart, when a boy was thinking of the future. It

was a dream such as any one of you may have about your life and how you mean to live it, such a dream as some of you will have, perhaps have had already.

But if Solomon's dream is a boy's dream of his life, how much interested are we by it, all we who are or have been boys and have our dreams: how much we want to know if the dream was worth anything, if it came true, was fulfilled. For so may it also be with dreams of ours.

Yet I would not have you decide this question of the worth of dreams only by the case of Solomon. His came true, and did not come true. He *did* have a wise and understanding heart: all Israel presently heard the tale of the two women and the babe, and saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment. But also he did become the selfish tyrant, and wear out his subjects with cruel exactions of tax and toil to increase his own imperial splendour. There was fulfilment and there was non-fulfilment for Solomon; and his case is not one of perfect omen, though it is a case which proves that a dream will be true to the dreamer, if only he will be true to the dream. But I would have you consider not by this royal instance, but on grounds of reason, the validity and power of a boy's dream.

First, then, I put before you this, that a dream has worth, even if it be not fulfilled. To have a good ambition, even though, from want of favouring circumstances, it should never be realized, is something, and something of worth. For such a dream as we are thinking of is not a random fancy, a creature of the imagining faculty: it is a certain state of the man's will, it is a moral choice which he has made, it is an attitude of his soul towards God and God's world. Solomon's dream was Solomon's choice of unselfish rule over his flock of men.

It is so with your dreams, when they are generous dreams. If one of you frames an ambition for his life to come which is an ambition of love and service to his neighbour for the love of God—that is an act of his will. An act of the will—even if no deed should follow it—still is an act of the soul: it is an act in which your spirit lives and exerts itself: in it you have taken up an attitude towards God and His purpose in the world. Nay, one may say more: it is an act of faith, of Christian faith; in it your spirit sees God and obeys Him; it is doing the thing which is the true end and perfection of all life, if it be true that the life of man is the seeing God. This is what a boy's dream is, even if the man cannot realize the dream.

Then do you take care that your lives are not without their dream. Do not go on living only in the present, but teach yourself to frame the hope of the future, the hope of the soldier, master, pastor, physician, captain of industry, servant of State. If your dream can, through no fault of yours, never be fulfilled, still you have done an act of faith, your soul has lived in the dreaming of it; and that life of the soul will not die, I think: somewhere in God's larger world of hereafter it will be suffered to realize itself, and the dream will after all be out.

But, next, a dream has worth, because dreams do fulfil themselves. How else? Men's dreams are men's thoughts; and it is thoughts which really bring things about. Ideas, we have all been told it, make and unmake and remake the world, all that world of human interests and actions. Dreams, then, must be strong things, and with power upon facts to shape them. A boy's dream must have in it force to make a man's life. That stands to reason. But it is not reason you here will respect most. With you an ounce of experience will

outweigh a pound of reason. What you will look to is that someone, who has had time to find out the truth, should tell you that in his experience this is so: that he has known schoolfellows, or has known pupils of his own, who in their boyhood dreamed dreams, and in them saw "the landscape of a deed to come," and now there is left of them the memory of the gallant life, and the gallant death, to witness that dreams do come true.

Only, let us remember, dreams when they come true may not always come true just as we dreamed. Again I name to you that word to me of a revered thinker now dead, "We know not what fulfilment is." Yes, some of you will have dreams of a generous service to God and man, and though they fulfil themselves, it will perhaps be not as you now image it. You dream of yourself in an early year as preacher and teacher, and perhaps it is soldier that you become; or you dream of yourself as soldier, and you become, like the ancestor of all Christian Scotland, the soldier of Christ, *miles Christi:* you plan to be pastor and you are master instead, or master and you are pastor: you think you will be philanthropist, but you turn out to be head of a firm of engineers or of a cotton-mill, and find that this way too you are serving your fellow-men; the dream is out, it all comes true, your soul was a sure prophet.

Do dreams come true? Believe me, you will ask yourselves that question whenever you too stand, as I do now, at the end of a path in life.

Someone a generation since wrote a beautiful book, and in it a chapter concerning this place, which he called not by its own name, but "Schola in Nubibus." The School in Cloudland, he named it, following an old Greek poet: the School in Dreamland, would be our way of it nowadays.

Whatever this writer meant by the title, this is a School in Dreamland to some of us, for it is a school about which dreams have been dreamed. Were they true? Have they been fulfilled? Yea, verily—as fulfilment is among men. We will not say (God forgive us if ever we thought it) that a dream has come to pass, as it was dreamed. We will not admit that what may to the common eye have seemed fulfilment, *was*, to our hearts, fulfilment, and reason for joy or pride. But this we will dare say, that if in this place any true good has been known by us, that good has come about because of dreams which were sent from God; and God be thanked for it alone!

XXX.

Tradition.

(Last Sermon at Glenalmond, July 29th, 1902.)

GENESIS XLVIII. 15, 16.

"God, before Whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God Who fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel that redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads."

IN a well-known book about the principles of art it is laid down, I remember, that in the choice of a subject, say for a group of statuary or for a picture, the artist should select that moment in an action which is most significant both of the past and the future, the moment which by the attitude and expression of the grouped figures tells us most of what has been happening just before, and is most prophetic of what is going to happen next. If that is a true canon of art, if the statue is best when the pose is most eloquent of noble action ended and beginning, if the portrait is best when it most resembles

> "A countenance in which do meet
> Sweet records, promises as sweet,"

then here is a beautiful picture on this page of Genesis, and here is a group made for a sculptor's hand, when Joseph, Chief of all Egypt under Pharaoh, leads his two boys to their grandsire's knee, and the faint, wrinkled hands of that man of many days and many sorrows and many adventures

are laid in blessing upon the childish heads. For see how past and future, and how great a past and future, what records and what promises meet at the bed-side of a nation's ancestor. This old man, who in his sickness strengthened himself and sat upon his bed, is the son of Isaac, and grandson of Abraham, first of the spiritual line: but he is father of this Joseph, the statesman in his strong prime who stands over his bed, and grandfather to these young boys, whose children will be the fighting tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, that guard the northern gate of Israel. This old man, whose eyes are dim with the veils of approaching death, is the meeting-point of five generations: father and father's father, son and son's sons are made one in him, the mid link of the chain of lives. We look, and we discern behind the grey head of Jacob two shadowy forms, of Isaac the gentle shepherd chief, and Abraham the friend of God; and from the bedside and the kneeling children our eyes look down a far vista peopled with the hero faces of Israel's soldiers, judges, kings, prophets, and saints. Great records, promises as great meet in that venerable form. Here is a picture for us. The hand of history has pencilled it, that it might stand always before men's eyes to picture to them that eternal human fact—Tradition, the handing on of life from one generation to a new one, the leave-taking of the age which passes, the bequeathing of the good that passing age has enjoyed to the coming age which shall enjoy it next. What else means the triple blessing over the young boys' heads, "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads"? "The blessing," says Israel the old, "which I inherited from my sires, the blessing which in my own life I have found and known, that blessing

be henceforth upon my children after me." This is tradition: this it is to be a link in the chain of life.

But observe what it is that the patriarch is handing on. Not that which old men when their time comes to pass commonly hand on as their gift—their wealth, their power, their knowledge, their name and the honour and rights which may have gathered round it. Not these, but a faith. "The God before Whom my fathers walked . . . the God which fed me . . . the Angel which redeemed me . . . bless the lads." Here is nothing which can be touched and measured, like gold or lands or flocks, but a spiritual possession, the knowledge of a God present and protective to the human life. His fathers' faith and the faith which has been his own, this he is handing on. The picture history has drawn us is the picture of the tradition of faith.

Then next observe how it is that Jacob can hand this tradition on. It is because he first has made the faith his own. He is not committing to Joseph and those two children a tradition of words. It is not a truth taught him from lip to ear by Isaac, who had received it from Abraham, and now transmitted out of a trusty memory to the mind of the new age. It is something which he learned by living it. The God Who shall be these children's Guardian is not a God credibly reported to have guarded Abraham: it is a God Who has been known to Jacob as the Shepherd of *his* life, and Redeemer of it from evil. "The Angel that redeemed *me*." It is just because at Bethel, sleeping among the rocks of the wild heath, Jacob had seen in dream the angel-stairway, and heard the voice of God, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land,"—and so it had been: it is because he had known in the thrice seven years of sojourn in Padan-

Aram the prospering hand of his fathers' God: it is because in Mahanaim the angels of God met him, and he said, "This is God's host"; it is because in Penuel "there wrestled one with him until the breaking of the day," and Jacob had prevailed in that spiritual contest, and won the blessing of the divine antagonist; it is because the heavenly watchers had kept him safe when on the morrow he stood in the power of the dread Arab chief, the elder brother, "with life-long injuries unavenged," and yet parted from him in peace and love: it is because in all these hours and other after-hours he had known an Angel that redeemed him from all evil, that Jacob can hand on the tradition of faith. We can hand on to others only that which is ours: be it wealth, name, power, knowledge, first it must have been our own. So is it with faith: only if we have made it our own; only if we have not learned but lived the faith, can we give it to those who shall come after us.

"We," "ours," "our own." From the tale of a patriarch we have slipped, see, into a tale of ourselves.

Yes, and rightly. For his is no unique incident, of an epic dignity, incapable of being repeated. The life of this Syrian chieftain was in its spiritual circumstances as a life as ours. An Angel of God redeems us also from evil; the dream in Bethel is as a boy's dream, when he knows that God is in the place where he lies: the sojourn in Padan-Aram is as the man's working life: the night wrestle in Penuel is an hour of searching doubt and unconquerable resolve which falls on any of ourselves: and this last scene, when the grandsire nearing his end lays hands in blessing on the lads who will be the future nation's sires, is as some hour of parting when men, or boys, like ourselves here to-day, hand on to those who remain after them a good tradition.

We then who are going away, elder or younger, either to new work in other fields, or to begin life in the University or the profession, what is the tradition we are handing on, and how are we able to hand that tradition on?

And the answer is, the tradition we shall hand on is a faith, or it is nothing worth.

And the answer is, we shall hand on that faith only if we have made it our own, if we have not learned but lived it.

The tradition is a faith. A school may have a tradition which is only a habit, a way of life, a dialect of its own, a local self-conceit. If it is no more than this, then let those who leave it put this tradition away from them as among their childish things. Not this is worth the pains to preserve and to pass on: not this, but a faith in Christ once delivered unto the saints, and from them delivered down the ages to even such a little Church of believers in Christ as gathers under a school chapel's roof. A faith in Christ; but a faith which has to be realized in, which has to take body and shape from the facts and opportunities and temptations of the daily life in common of teachers and scholars, masters and boys, priest and communicants, captains of school and form and ground, workers for examinations, practisers on a shooting-range, athletes on the playing-field. A faith in Christ, but in a Christ Who is the Christ of boys, a Christ Whom they can find in their goings out and comings in, their games, their work, their fellowship. This faith is our tradition: or else what we hand on is nothing worth.

But this tradition of a faith we can hand on only if we have not learned alone, but lived it.

You older boys now going away from this beloved place, you to whom I am drawn near this time by a sympathy which has been possible in my own life as a master only once before,

the bond of a going-away from school in which I share with you—you older boys, who hand on the leadership in discipline and games and opinion to a new generation, you can hand on whatever tradition has been made your own, whatever has been lived by you; and you can hand on no other. For whatsoever of holy tradition you have made your own by integrity, purity, courage, patience, loyalty (and there are of you, I know, those who have made something their own), for this thank God, and trust Him that it shall not perish.

And we elders, myself and fellow-workers, who also are leaving this school, we too shall hand on only what we have made our own, a faith we have not learned but lived. We must ask our hearts the question, which we may not answer aloud, which perhaps we cannot, and certainly we dare not, answer even to our own hearts in secret—whether there is anything we have made our own by living it, and now may at parting convey to you. We may not answer this aloud or to the heart. But some word should come from me to you, whom, if my desire and purpose and prayers for you give me that right, I will dare call my sons. Some word about tradition. For there broods over my thoughts to-day overpoweringly the memory of a tradition very sacred, and in my ears keeps sounding an echo which does not die, words of a man great in faith, and great in deeds of faith, bidding a young man to accept, as from a father, a high tradition, and "here or elsewhere still continue the living life which Christ has given us." What word then from me to you, now that my turn is come to hand on the holy charge? What word but this patriarch's to sons of his? "The God before Whom a father of my own mind and spirit walked, the God Who has been *my* Shepherd all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed *me* from all evil—that hand

of the unseen Father upon my life which I may not speak of, and which I cannot doubt, which has guarded me in what hours I have known of peril or perplexity or wearying of hope—bless you, even you, my sons, and make of you (if so He will, and if so be good) 'a multitude in the midst of the earth,' but make of you (as we may pray undoubtfully) a people of His name, a school where the faith in Him abides from generation to generation, from children to children's children."

THE END.

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Skrine, John Huntley, 1848-1923.
The mountain mother : Glenalmond sermons
by John Huntley Skrine. -- London : Skeffin
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30 sermons.

1. Episcopal Church in Scotland--Sermons.
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